

Controversy stalls Trojan hearing

Analysis by CATHERINE SIEGNER
Of the Emerald

Hearings in Salem this week on whether the Trojan nuclear plant may safely operate while a strengthening buttress is added to one wall of the control building have been mired in demonstrations and federal regulations.

The Atomic Safety and Licensing Board of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is conducting the hearings. Several members of the public requested them last summer after deficiencies were found in Trojan's walls.

Portland General Electric Co., the major owner of the plant, revealed in July that the control building walls did not meet federal specifications for withstanding earthquakes. Plans for modification of the walls are scheduled for hearings next month, but PGE's request for an interim operation permit from the NRC is being discussed first.

Members of the Trojan Decommissioning Alliance disrupted the hearing Monday, objecting to the board's refusal to hear public testimony on interim operation and causing board chairer Marshall Miller to adjourn the hearing three times.

Linda Werner of the Columbia Environmental Council, one of the intervening parties in the hearing, appeared in a clown suit and called herself "No Nukes Nancy." The board was not amused, and after the third adjournment ended state police were stationed around the hearing room.

TDA claims the NRC is not following its own regulations by refusing limited appearance public testimony at the beginning of the hearing. Miller has scheduled such appearances for today and Friday in Portland, but TDA feels the testimony will be less effective after the Salem hearing is over.

The board's staff has recommended in-

terim start-up of Trojan, based on three computer tests by Bechtel Engineering, the original contractor for the plant. A recent computer model PGE ran, however, indicated additional problems with earthquake resistance, this time involving the pipe system which runs cooling water into the reactor building.

"I don't have any answers about the pipes," said Steve Loy, PGE's public information officer. "We hope to have final results next week."

The board refused to hear PGE testimony Tuesday on the newly-discovered pipe problem, and Miller ruled the matter must be addressed at a later hearing.

The building modifications will be paid for by Bechtel, Loy said. "It will be between \$2.5 and \$3 million. That's not much in today's world compared to the \$20 million we're paying for replacement power while Trojan is shut down."

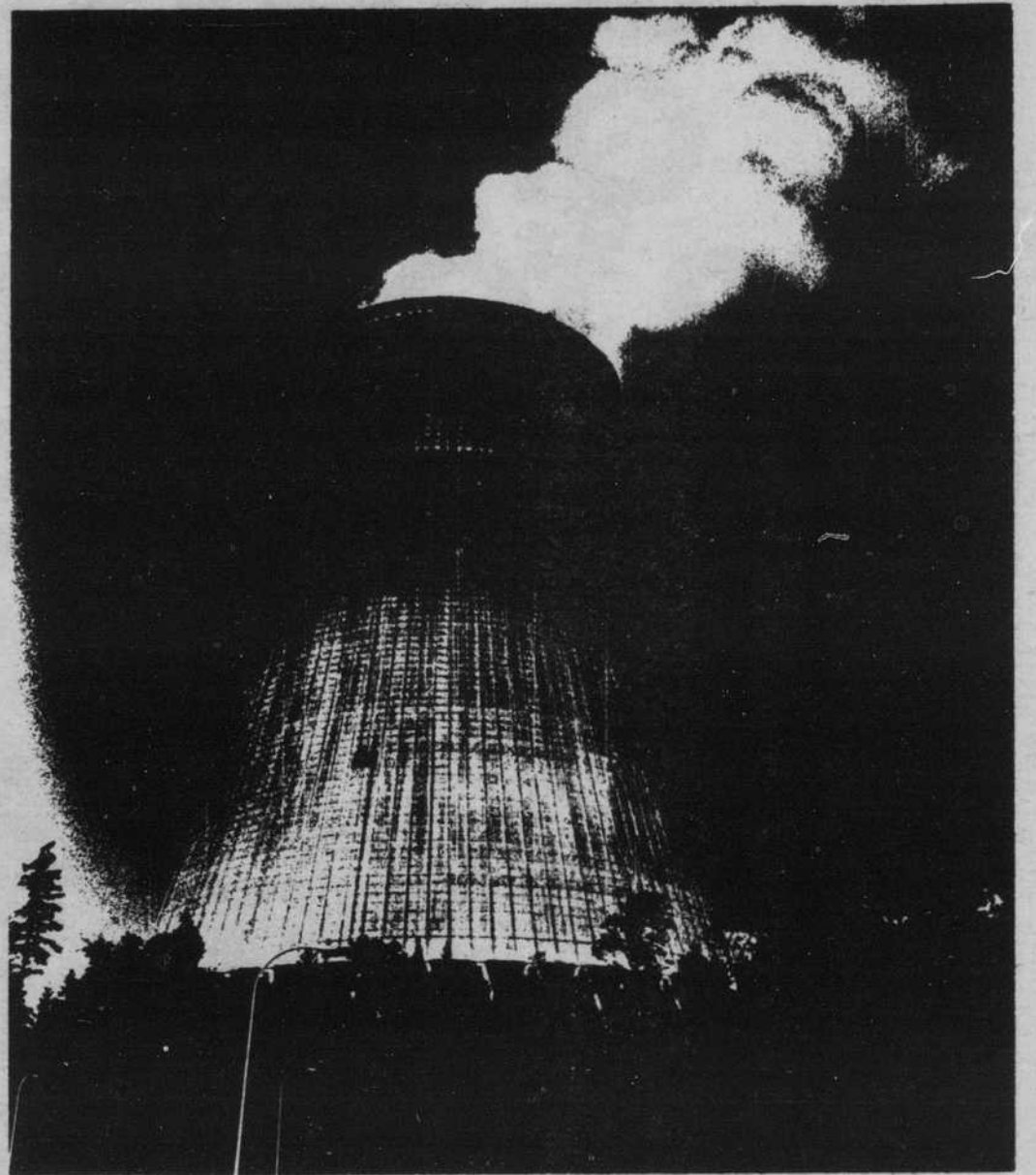
Information released Wednesday, however, indicated that Bechtel need not assume any liability for design errors.

"The contract between PGE and Bechtel was made public at the hearing," said TDA member Norman Solomon. "PGE signed away any rights ten years ago, and it was kept secret until now. Bechtel is absolved of any negligence in design."

"That contract makes them (PGE) look so incompetent," Solomon claimed. "They only let out a little information at a time because they aren't sure what kind of a game they can run."

The board is expected to make a decision on interim operation in the next few weeks. PGE's Loy said the company is "borrowing" power in the meantime to service its customers.

"We have been getting power from Idaho, and a dwindling amount of surplus hydropower from BPA (Bonneville Power Administration)," he said. "But now we will borrow some from Southern California Edison, which we will have to pay back by



Emerald photo

1981 with interest."

This power will come from oil-fired plants and the contract runs through December. PGE itself has an oil-fired combustion turbine near Beaver, but it takes a different type of oil that is too expensive to make firing it up profitable Loy said.

Solomon is not as confident Trojan will be back in operation soon.

"PGE was hoping to start the plant up at the end of November. They have a shot at restarting it in December, but with the safety pipe problem it may not be until the first of the year."

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Weinstein recall supporters file complaint against Archie

An elections law violation complaint has been filed against Lane County Commissioner Archie Weinstein.

The complaint, filed by a member of the Citizens Cooperating to Recall Weinstein, charges that Weinstein attempted to pressure three Comprehensive Employment and Training Act employees in the forestry program by raising questions about whether they had been critical of him when the board was considering extension of their jobs.

The complaint also charges that Weinstein's aide, George Kramer, worked on a recall effort against Commissioner Jerry Rust on county time and that Kramer attempted to intimidate Don Penfold, the county's chief elections officer.

Notice that the complaint was filed was announced by the Citizens Cooperating to Recall Weinstein at a press conference Wednesday. The complaint was filed with the secretary of state's office in Salem and has been re-

ferred to the state attorney general's office for review, investigation and a recommendation.

Recall group members asserted that Weinstein has refused to address the issues and that they plan to show that Weinstein did not live up to his pre-election campaign promises.

Meanwhile, a Keep Archie Committee was organized earlier this week.

The committee has many volunteers already, according to Weinstein's wife, Kathy. "It's amazing," she said. "A lot of his ex-employees are coming around to help."

The Keep Archie Committee can be reached at 343-7411 and at 343-6815.

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