

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD  
Before Administrative Judges  
Louis J. Carter, Chair  
Frederick J. Shon  
Dr. Oscar H. Paris

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In the Matter of:

:

Docket Nos.

CONSOLIDATED EDISON COMPANY OF NEW YORK  
Inc. (Indian Point, Unit No. 2),

:

50-247 SP  
50-286 SP

:

POWER AUTHORITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
(Indian Point, Unit No. 3)

:

July 23, 1982  
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Testimony Submitted on Behalf of  
"New York City Council" Intervenors

By

ALEXANDER THOMAS SIMOS Ph.D

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New York, New York 10010  
(212) 673-2040  
CRAIG KAPLAN,  
SPECIAL COUNSEL

## Personal Qualifications

My name is Alexander Thomas Simos. I am an Assistant Clinical Professor at New York University Medical Center and a Fellow at The Institute of Psychohistory in New York City. I have personally conducted psychological evaluations of over one thousand New Yorkers and have been responsible for the supervisions of an additional thousand individuals from a wide range of cultural groups residing in New York. I have served as a consultant to the Bi-Cultural Program of the New York City Board of Education, as well as being appointed to the Commission established by a group of residents of Middletown, Pennsylvania to study the effects of the accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant.

I was born and have lived most of my life in New York City. I completed my Master of Science in Psychology at Yeshiva University in New York City and my Bachelor of Science degree at the City College of New York. I completed my doctorate at New York University in 1971, where my dissertation focussed on the grapho-motor processes and products of mentally retarded boys.

Between 1953 and 1954 I served as an officer in the Corps of Engineers of the United States Army in Korea. My duties as a company commander and battalion motor officer involved the design and maintenance of roads and military installations that were used by the United Nations forces. I was decorated by the Korean government for my contribution to the reconstruction of the transportation and community resources in that country.

A summary of my scholarship and research activities is annexed hereto.

The purpose of my testimony is to establish that any attempt to evacuate New York City must take into account the following factors:

1. Evacuation is the product in an act of sending away inhabitants from a threatened area, it is not the process.
2. The disparate groups that comprise the population of New York City differ in their response to authority figures, and will differ in their response to an evacuation order.
3. The act of sending away inhabitants requires viable and appropriate means of motility to effectuate evacuation.
4. A concern for invisible contamination exists, resulting in increased anxiety regarding radiation emissions.
5. The universal noumenon of the denial of death facilitates the chimera of evacuation rather than the reality of evacuation.

1. Evacuation is the product, not the process.

If it may be asserted that "planning is not action with a definite end," then "planning" is irrelevant to evacuation which is by definition an action taken toward the definite end of sending away inhabitants from a threatened area. The act of evacuation represents an end product that differs from the process of "planning," which does not encompass an "end." The extent to which "planning" may be viewed as an "educational activity" in which the act of evacuation is rehearsed will, therefore, reflect the product, not the process.

Such educational activity should highlight the range of responses of various disparate groups to an evacuation order based, at least in part, on the expertise of Consolidated Edison. The credibility attached by various groups in the City to the authority figures espousing evacuation, as well as the efficacy of the act of evacuation for these groups, will then determine whether and to what degree one or another group will participate in the first rehearsal. The viability of evacuation demonstrated in the first rehearsal will contribute heavily to subsequent attitudes toward evacuation by the people of the City.

## II. Disparate groups, American evacuations, and civil emergencies.

In the fourteen years during which evacuations were reported by the Environmental Protection Agency, the total number of people evacuated comprised only 12% of the current resident population of New York City, with each average individual evacuation consisting of less than one percent of the City's population. We might also assume with some accuracy, that the evacuations reported by the Agency occurred in communities whose inhabitants were more homogeneous in cultural background than those found in the City.

The diversity of City groups manifests itself both with regard to the credibility of authority figures as well as the reality of motility as they perceive it. For example, it is likely that a multinational corporation owner of a condominium whose car is garaged in his own building will react differently from a Hong Kong immigrant whose car is parked near his rental apartment, or from an unemployed black with no car at all. In August 1977, the interruption of service from Consolidated Edison (the New York City blackout) did not lead to pro-social behaviors by many members of the New York City community.

Rather than demonstrating a concern for the common good during an actual evacuation, some groups, both economically advantaged and disadvantaged, may experience a "one last fling" response where the spontaneously evolving leadership will focus on the extravagance of acquisition first, and evacuation later, if at all.

III. Evacuation and Motility In order to participate in the act of evacuation potential evacuees must have appropriate means of motility available in order that evacuation can in fact take place. The only condition under which evacuation could successfully be achieved for the largest number of those New Yorkers who accepted an evacuation order would be if a selected evacuation site could be reached by foot. (However, even an exodus by foot would be hampered by the likelihood of personal possessions being taken by the evacuees, consistent with published instructions from representatives of host communities.) Assuming that motormen and bus drivers remained at their posts during an evacuation, evacuees would turn to these modes of transportation, contributing to the possibility of chaos as people attempted to board subways and buses that normally appear off-schedule, and increasingly do not complete their scheduled runs without breakdowns, that frequently require the evacuation of whole trains on stations already crowded with people dislodged from an earlier breakdown. Since most New Yorkers who use public transportation have had repeated experiences with the unreliability of these modes, the issue of trust in authority once again becomes paramount. An evacuation order that includes the command or even the suggestion that a subway must be used automatically damages the psychological credibility of the evacuation order itself.

The most attractive means of motility is the car, which is available to a minority of New Yorkers. If we assume that sixty cars can be parked on all four sides of a City block, than a maximum of 360 evacuees with their possessions can evacuate that block by car.

While it is likely that other people would wish to climb aboard, it is not likely that New Yorkers would accept strangers into their cars under these conditions. Even under non-emergency conditions, it is inconceivable that an automobile owner whose windshield has just been involuntarily washed by a stranger will invite that stranger into his car. There is little in the actual experience of transport within the City to suggest that pro-social behaviors rarely demonstrated in our day to day living would suddenly emerge under emergency conditions.

IV. Invisible Contamination. The fact that radiation is real, is invisible, and is a contaminant is known by virtually all people who have ever heard of radiation. As a consultant to PANE at Three Mile Island, my interviews with people in Middleton, and those from communities surrounding Three Mile Island led me to the conclusion that the individuals I interviewed and the family I stayed with in Middleton all expressed a lingering concern about radiation emissions. As my host said, "It is infuriating and depressing to know that no matter how clean you and your home are, that stuff is always there, and you never know how much, or what it is doing to your kids." He also informed me that I would be sleeping in the bedroom of an absent son, since it was his practice and that of other parents in that community to send their children away in order that these children "could breathe uncontaminated air." Data reported by Robert Jay Lifton in his studies of Hiroshima survivors also attests to the fact that invisible contamination is in fact quite real, and does heighten the anxiety level of



those exposed to it.

V. Denial of Death. The defense mechanism of denial allows all of us to ward off unpleasant or life threatening situations through out refusal to acknowledge the existence of these situations or to distort the outcome of these situations in such a manner that the danger inherent within them is negated. The certainty of our own demise through natural causes leads to what has been acknowledged as the most powerful of all denials - the denial of death. As Ernest Becker has so eloquently argued, we will submit to almost any belief system, any leader who will overtly or covertly promise us immortality or, at the very least, a plan for prolonging life in a realistically perilous situation. However, in spite of the universality of the denial of death, it basically remains what it has always been - a distortion of reality, a lie. What is then immeasurably destructive from a psychological standpoint is the promise of safety and prolonged life when the obvious reality of the action - in this case evacuation - is one that cannot be brought about. The psychological destructiveness of such a proposal stems from the depression and rage that always follows on the heels of cynical manipulations. The longer lasting destructiveness evolves from the reinforcement of an erosion of trust that then makes even the most legitimate expressions of authority subjects of cynical scrutiny and derision. Since many cultural groups in New York City have already had ample experiences with the abuses of power, both as New Yorkers and as refugees from other countries, an "evacuation plan" that can never lead to an evacuation can only strengthen their innate distrust of authority figures not of their ethnic groups.

The evacuation of New York City would involve over one hundred

times the average number of people ever evacuated in any single recorded American evacuation in all the years such records have been tabulated in this country. To formulate a plan for such an evacuation is to cynically appeal to our need for massive denial of death; it is to create a chimera, a hoax. Such a plan must ultimately accelerate the erosion of trust that is already in evidence among many cultural groups within the City. If adults are to be accepting of leaders and children are to obey the parental surrogates who would in turn lead them, a dramatic expression of credible leadership must emerge. Such a reconfirmation of legitimate authority could come about not by a plan to evacuate New York City, but rather a plan that would rapidly lead to the closing of Indian Point.



CURRICULUM VITAE - ALEXANDER THOMAS SIMOS, Ph.D.

Home Address: 115 East 82nd Street, New York, NY 10028  
Telephone: (212)628-2813

Office Address: 3 East 80th Street, New York, NY 10021  
Telephone: (212)628-2813

Personal: Born: November 19, 1930  
Married; two children  
Social Security Number: 126-22-4726

Education: Brooklyn Technical High School, New York City  
City College of New York  
Yeshiva University  
New York University, Ph.D. 1971

Professional License: Psychologist, New York State  
#004858

Memberships: American Psychological Association - 1968  
New York Society of Clinical Psychologists - 1970  
International Psychohistorical Association - 1978

University Appointments: Intern, Department of Psychology, Flower and Fifth Avenue Hospital, - 1963  
Clinical Instructor in Psychiatry, New York University Medical Center, - 1971  
Lecturer, The Cooper Union Department of Continuing Education, - 1975  
Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, New York University Medical Center, - 1975

Hospital Appointments: Staff Psychologist, Department of Psychology, Flower and Fifth Avenue Hospital, - 1964  
Staff Psychologist, Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital, - 1966

Positions:

School Psychologist, Lifeline Center for  
Child Development, - 1965  
Psychoeducational Research Technician,  
Language Laboratory Project, New York City  
Board of Education, - 1963  
Consultant Psychologist, New York City  
Board of Education Advisory Council on  
Family Living - Sex Education, - 1973  
Consultant Psychologist, New York City  
Board of Education Bilingual Bicultural  
Program, - 1975  
Principal Investigator, Project:  
Intelligence Test Score Patterns of  
Hospitalized Adolescents, - 1978  
Principal Investigator, Project: Instant  
Recall Among Hospitalized Adolescents, - 1979  
Principal Investigator, Project: Filicidal  
Intent in Adolescence, - 1979

Consultation:

Consultant: Family Living Sex Education  
Project, New York City Board Of Education,  
September 1973 - June 1975  
Consultant: Bilingual Bicultural Program,  
New York City Board of Education,  
September 1975 - June 1976

Scientific Publications:

Symptom Patterns in Hospitalized Adolescents  
(with P. Kim and M. Kalogerakis) Neuropsychiatry,  
1978, 17: 1 - 8  
Cyprus/Cuba: An Emiscopal Fantasy, J. Of  
Psychohistory, Summer 1980, Vol 8, No. 1

## TEACHING AND SUPERVISION

### New York University Medical Center

- 1969 - Supervisor, Psychology Intern Program
- 1970 - Supervisor, Group Psychotherapy Project with Hospitalized Adolescents
- 1972 - Supervisor, Child Psychiatry Residents' Inpatient Psychotherapy Cases
- 1973 - Supervisor, Child Psychiatry Residents' Outpatient Psychotherapy Cases
- 1976 - Leader; Adolescent Community Meetings; Inpatient Psychiatric Patients, Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital
- 1977 - Discussion Leader, Psychodynamics of Adolescent Groups: Psychiatric Fellows, Psychiatric Residents, Psychology Interns, and Attending Staff of Inpatient Adolescent Unit

### Cooper Union

- 1975 - Instructor, Psychology of Everyday Living
- 1976 - Instructor, The Psychology of Ernest Beecker

### City University of New York

- 1977 - Director, Seminar at Center for European Studies, "Filicidal Intent Among Hellenes."
- 1979 - Director, Seminar at Center for European Studies, "Culture and Ethnicity as Group Fantasies," The Psychology of Howard Stein.
- 1979 - Director, Seminar at Center for European Studies, "Critique of Stein's Thesis on Identity and Ethnicity."

PRESENTATIONS

Grand Rounds, New York University Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry:  
"A Comparison of 101 Schizophrenics with 101 Non-Schizophrenics" May 1974.

Grand Rounds, New York University Medical Center; Department of Psychiatry:  
"Reading Patterns of Inner City Adolescents", October 1975.

Seminar, Free Voice Symposium, Station WEVD, New York City: "Greek Dictatorship:  
Psychological Symbolism and Political Reality.", March 1975

Grand Rounds, New York University Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry:  
"Schizophrenia, Adolescence, and Violence." October 1977.