

TESTIMONY FOR NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION HEARINGS

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Thank you for the opportunity to express the concerns of teachers who work in the White Plains School District. Seven White Plains schools have been designated as reception areas.

Our school district signed a contract with the Red Cross on July 1, 1981 allowing the use of only the high school as a reception center and a congregate care center. The school district was between superintendents at the time. The former superintendent, Arthur Antin, had retired the previous month. He had blocked all efforts to involve our school district in any evacuation plans. The succeeding superintendent, Jerry Marcus, had not yet arrived to assume his position. Dick Greene was acting in place of the superintendent at that July 1, 1981 meeting. Dr. Greene left shortly afterwards to assume the superintendency of the Yorktown School District.

In spring, 1982 some White Plains' teachers read in The Citizen Register that the Ridgeway School was matched with a Croton school for purposes of receiving Croton students in case of evacuation due to a disaster at Indian Point. When the Association asked Dr. Marcus about it, he had it researched in school district files and found a contract with the Red Cross for use of the high school only. We asked where White Plains High School students would go and were told they'd be sent home.

In the fall, after some contacts with the Parents' Alliance to Close Indian Point I went to the White Plains Public Library and read the plan myself. Six other schools (besides our high school) are involved as reception areas. There has been no

authorization by the school district for the use of these buildings. Of those six unauthorized schools, three are no longer used by the school district. Two have been sold and one is rented. 2,564 upcounty students are slated to go to these buildings which are no longer under school district jurisdiction. What happens to these upcounty children?

The Emergency Evacuation Plan was released in August, 1981. Rosedale, North Street and Church Street were closed in June, 1979. The plan to close these schools was announced January 12, 1977 and voted into action at the February 15, 1977 Board of Ed meeting. What kind of research did Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. do to produce an emergency plan involving three school buildings whose closing was announced four and a half years prior to the publication of the plan? How reliable is this plan?

Prior to June, 1979 the White Plains Intermediate School was Highlands Junior and Elementary School. It was never called Intermediate until Church Street, Rosedale and North Street were closed. The Evacuation Plan refers to the building by its new name. How did the planners know that the Highlands School had a new name, but not that three other buildings had closed? The change of names and closing of schools were all part of the same Reorganization Plan of the White Plains School District.

One of our principals received a letter two years ago telling him his school was involved in the emergency plan. It also said that a countywide meeting would be held to discuss and refine the plan. He heard no further news and assumed there was no meeting or his school was no longer involved.

There are three open unauthorized buildings under school district authority which are designated as reception centers. They are White Plains Intermediate School, Ridgeway and Mamaroneck Avenue. We have 1,660 students in those three buildings

plus 1,955 students in our high school. We must remove 3,600 White Plains students from those schools to accommodate the incoming evacuees. How do we do that?

We do not have emergency contact cards for all our students. Most parents work. We do not have an accurate list of working parents' phone numbers. We do not have the school phones, the personnel, nor the accurate information to make 3,600 parent contacts. What do we do with our children?

There is also the problem of buses. We cannot arrange for buses to take children home until after parents have been contacted. And, most of our children go on buses. For example, of the twenty-two students in my class, two walk to school. Mine is a neighborhood school. However, as we have consolidated buildings, the neighborhoods have become larger.

Imagine the confusion at the receiving schools. Use White Plains Intermediate School as an example. There are 729 fifth and sixth graders from the entire city. The principal, two assistant principals, two secretaries and possibly four or five other people must contact 729 parents. After the contact is made and parents have made arrangements, children will be placed on buses. There are 18 buses that pick up at the Intermediate School. While school officials are contacting parents, 21 buses from upcounty may arrive with 1,351 frightened children. The roads leading into the school grounds are typically small suburban streets. The pick-up and delivery area for buses in the parking lot is limited.

Furthermore, parents from White Plains and upcounty may be driving to the Intermediate School in search of their children. Who will be in charge? Administrators and clerical staff will be making phone calls; teachers will be looking after students and there will be bedlam.

Further, our buses are on a staggered schedule. The High School is on an early schedule and the elementary schools a late one. The buses service the high school and then go on a second run for the other schools. There is no telling how White Plains could schedule an emergency send home of 3,600 students when we use the same buses twice. Understand also, some of our parents do not have private transportation to come and rescue their children.

Another factor is finding schools. Consider that parents from upcounty will be searching all over White Plains for their children. Mamaroneck Avenue School is not on Mamaroneck Avenue but on Nosband Avenue. That street is three blocks long. Ridgeway School is at the corner of Mamaroneck Avenue and Ridgeway. Most out-of-towners assume Ridgeway is Mamaroneck Avenue School. There is also a Mamaroneck Avenue School in Mamaroneck that is on Mamaroneck Avenue. If you live in Peekskill and your child is sent to Mamaroneck Avenue School in White Plains, you will probably drive down Mamaroneck Avenue till you come to the Ridgeway School. Not finding your child, you will get in your car and keep driving into Mamaroneck and stop at their Mamaroneck Avenue School. Maybe someone there will tell you then to go back to White Plains and try again. Have you ever lost a child? Can you imagine the state of these people driving around White Plains searching for children? Wouldn't it make more sense to unite parents and children in areas with which they are familiar?

Meanwhile, there will be 5,521 children being delivered to White Plains in 102 vehicles plus an unspecified number of other people being delivered to White Plains High School. What are bus drivers supposed to do with the 2,564 students designated to go to the schools the district no longer owns or services?

Consider also the relationship of the school reception areas with the Associated Reception Centers. I will ignore which buildings are opened and closed for the sake of argument. Ridgeway and Rosedale buildings are in the same postal zone as White Plains

High School. It takes less than five minutes by car to travel between them. Yet both Ridgeway and Rosedale are associated with Woodlands High School in Greenburgh. If the White Plains High School cannot accommodate any more associated school reception areas, wouldn't it make more sense to choose buildings closer to Woodlands?

The evacuation plan is to remove people from a ten mile radius. What guarantee is there that there will be no nuclear fallout in White Plains? Are people being moved to our community because we know White Plains will be safe?

What do we do in White Plains with our swollen population if there is a northwest wind? Suppose there is a shift in the wind in both directions and intensity. Imagine 38,000 workers trying to leave the city along with the 48,000 residents plus shoppers plus the evacuees from upcounty. How do we evacuate White Plains if a nuclear fall out is headed our way?

The plan is for a three day evacuation period. How do we know it is only going to be three days at the maximum? What does White Plains do if it is a longer stay?

Are there any plans to test water for contamination in the receiving areas? If the three day period of evacuation is extended, from where would food supplies come and what is the likelihood of contamination?

Finally, I would like to return to my first point. Only our high school has been authorized by the Board of Education for use in this evacuation plan. They had no knowledge of the scope or responsibility accorded the White Plains schools in this evacuation plan until I brought it to our superintendent's notice. That experience has been repeated in other reception communities as well. No one seems to be considering the plight of the receiving communities.

Our superintendent has stated to the Red Cross "We do not expect to use our staff should the high school or any other facility be needed." Who will run the furnaces? Even if the superintendent instructs the custodial staff to remain and help, do you really believe they will risk contamination? I suspect that the poor creatures from upcounty will be treated as "lepers of old" and that the community of White Plains will seek its own self-protection.

We teachers in White Plains urge you to reject this evacuation plan.

MAC/nc

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