COLD SPRING, N. Y.
NEWS AND RECORDER
W. CIRC. N. AVAIL.

JAN 7 1976

Watch on the Environment

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The proposed nuclear power plant in the town of Lloyd, Ulster County, will be the subject of two important meetings this week. The first, January 7th at 7:30 pm at Highland High School, will be the State's Energy Research and Development Agency's first public information. Many of the consultants who worked on the state's recently released report will be on hand to explain its' various sections and to answer questions from the public. The second meeting, sponsored by the opponents of the nuclear power complex, will be held Sunday, January 11th at 2 PM at the New Paltz High School. They will discuss "Nuclear Power in the Hudson Valley: Its' Impact on You". Congressman Hamilton Fish, an opponent of nuclear energy will serve as moderator for the program. Both meetings should be lively ones, as the proposed Lloyd plant has drawn much criticism from both local residents and people who are concerned about the future of this area.

Much of the state ERDA's report has come under fire from interested scientists in this area, who claim that many of the Impact Assessments were poorly prepared and hastily done. These scientists, many of whom are professors at nearby colleges, will present their rebuttals to the state's report on Sunday. I urge as many people as possible from this area to attend, for this is an issue of the utmost importance. If you do not want your life to be placed in double jeopardy (living mid-way between two nuclear power plants) now is the time to stand up and be counted.

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Sometime later this month the hearings on General Electric's discharge of PCB's into the Hudson will draw to a close. Throughout the proceedings G.E. has received a number of setbacks to its' main contentions that PCB's are not found in any great concentrations in the river, and that they do not represent a health hazard to humans. G.E.'s expert witness Dr. Gerald Lauer admitted under cross examination that his data, which showed concentrations of PCB in fish taken from the Hudson no greater than 2.7 parts per million (ppm), was inaccurate. In a dramatic move GE rejected his data and accepted the State Department of Environmental Conservation's findings of PCB levels up to 1,328 ppm-some 265 times greater than the 5.0 ppm the federal Food and Drug Administration says is the maximum safe level (the FDA is currently revising this maximum downward) GE had also claimed that no worker at its' two plants had ever been ill because of exposure to PCB, which was effectively refuted by the testimony of union and health officials who presented documentary evidence to the contrary. Whatever the outcome of the hearings, an appeal of the ruling is expected.

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MONS 032919