

# Church leaders claim sanctuary for refugees

United Press International  
Churches across the nation have formed a network of sanctuaries for Salvadorans and religious leaders are trying to convince authorities to exempt church-sponsored refugees from deportation.

"The principle of sanctuary is not a right that can be accepted or neglected," the Rev. Osvaldo Hirschmann told a Los Angeles news conference Wednesday. "The principle of sanctuary is a holy right of the church, whoever does not respect this does not respect God."

Joined by local church leaders, Hirschmann — whose congregation at Angelica Lutheran Church is comprised chiefly of Salvadoran refugees — said churches throughout the country plan to participate in the network. He said 15 in Southern California have designated themselves as sanctuaries.

News conferences to announce the national ecumenical network also were held Wednesday in Berkeley, Calif.; Cleveland, Ohio; New York City and Washington, D.C. The

announcements were timed to coincide with the second anniversary of the assassination of Catholic Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero of El Salvador. "We want the sanctuary to be public, peaceful and legal," the Rev. Philip Zwerling, minister of the First Unitarian-Universalist Church, said in Los Angeles. "We pay homage today to the actions of Archbishop Romero, who gave his life trying to save the lives of the people of El Salvador."

In Tucson, a Presbyterian minister announced his church building has become a sanctuary for illegal aliens fleeing political violence in El Salvador and introduced a Salvadoran he said would be taken in.

As U.S. Border Patrol agents watched from across the street, the Rev. John M. Fife introduced the man identified only as Alfredo. Fife said he would be the first refugee to be openly housed in the Southside United Presbyterian Church.

Fife said he could not be certain the Border Patrol would

observe "the church's traditional role as a sanctuary," which dates to earliest times.

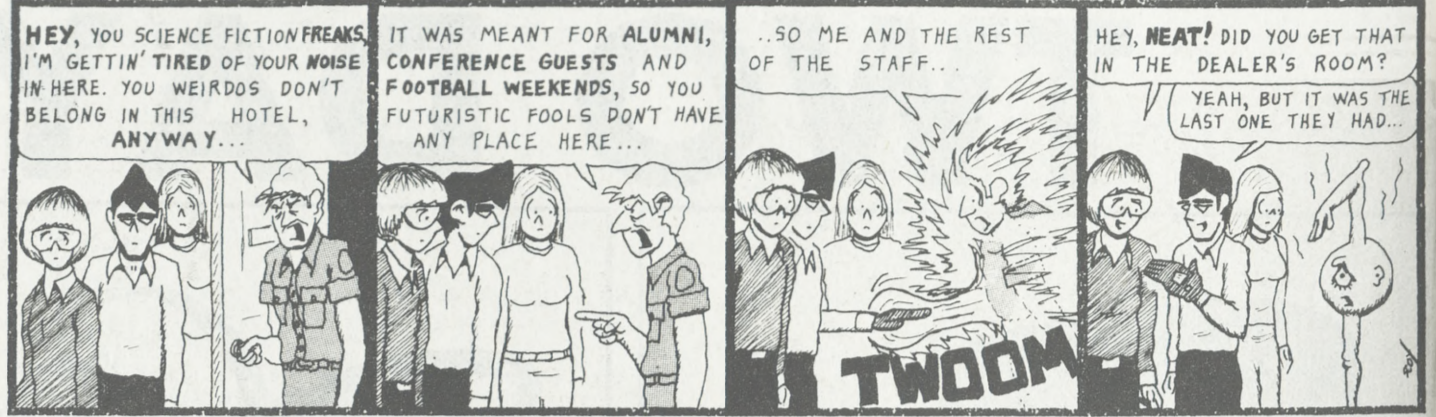
"If they intend to (make an arrest), I certainly hope they operate legally for a change," Fife told some 40 parishioners and news reporters. "The church has a long and honorable history of providing sanctuary in cases like this."

Gary MacEoin, an author specializing in Latin-American relations, told the Tucson gathering Salvadoran illegal aliens can be defined as refugees under United Nations classifications the United States observes.

MacEoin, a consultant to Oxfam-America, a worldwide human rights and anti-hunger agency, said the United States must accept Salvadoran refugees as all civilized countries must.

MacEoin alleged aliens held by immigration authorities in federal detention camps at El Centro, Calif.; Harlingen, Texas, and Brooklyn, N.Y. Navy yard were physically mistreated by authorities.

## Warped



By Scott McCullar

## Problem tiny officials say

# Nuclear plant shut down

United Press International  
BUCHANAN, N.Y. — Officials ordered a cold shutdown of the Indian Point Unit 3 nuclear power plant 35 miles north of New York City Thursday because a leak in a steam generator pipe sent a small amount of radioactive steam into the atmosphere.

The officials said the amount of radioactive gas that escaped into the air over suburban Westchester County was tiny. The leak was declared an "unusual event," the lowest classification of nuclear accident.

A spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Bethesda, Md., said: "There was

no reason to disturb the neighbors." He said the leak was of such a small magnitude that emergency procedures outside the plant were not necessary.

The release of 100 gallons of water, which became steam when it hit the atmosphere, between 9:50 p.m. and midnight Wednesday was measured at .002 millirems of radioactivity, officials said. The maximum annual federal dose limit is 500 millirems.

Jack Brumfield, a spokesman for the New York State Power Authority, said the water, at about 500 degrees, flashed as it entered the atmosphere, turned into steam and escaped through vents in the building. Some of the radioactive water was also absorbed into the plant's normally non-radioactive secondary system.

He said the 965-megawatt plant was at about 300 degrees at mid-morning and was being brought to cold shutdown,

which he defined as under 200 degrees. Brumfield said the authority believed only one of the 13,000 tubes in the steam generator was affected.

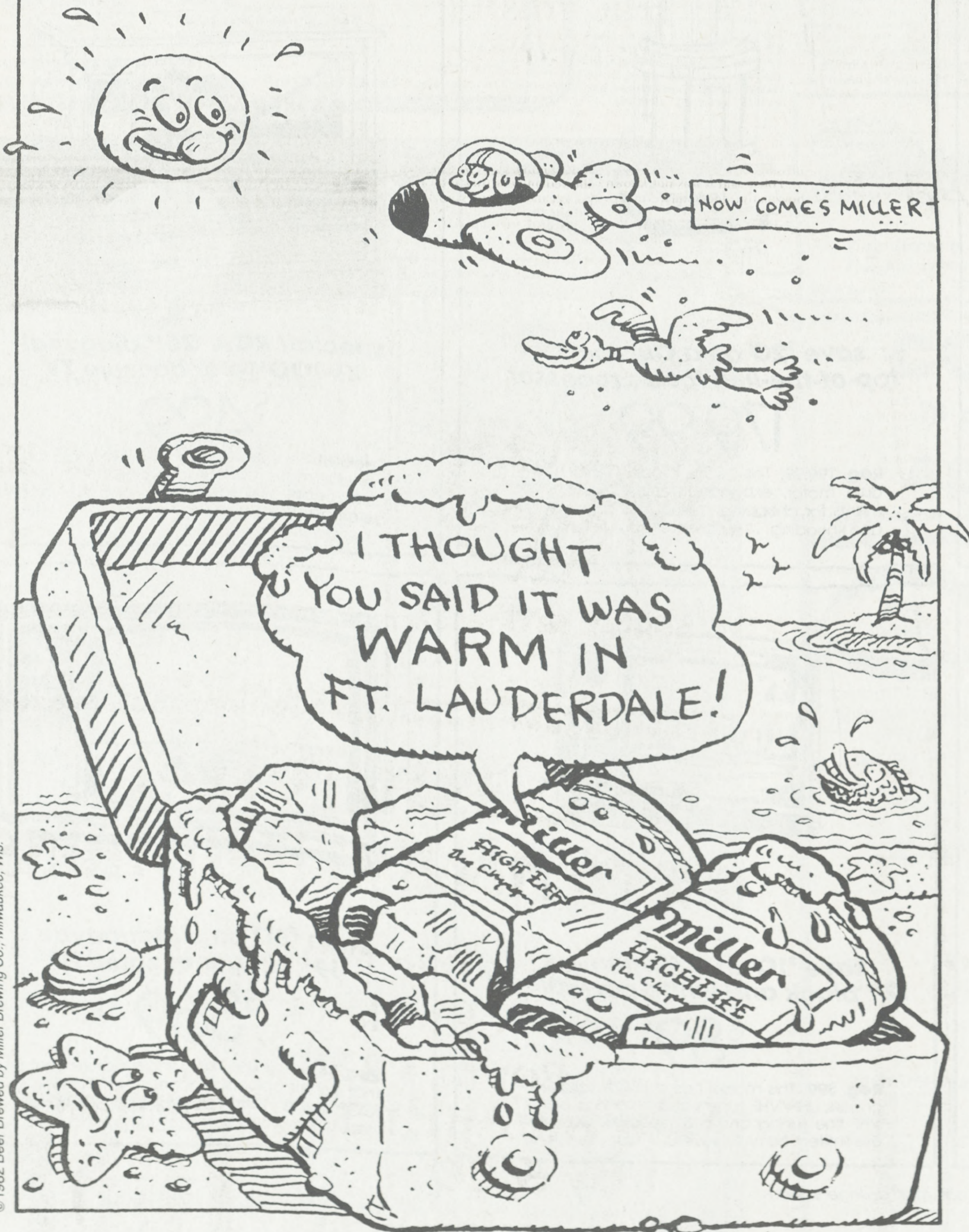
"It took a while to determine whether we had a leak or not and if the leak was substantial enough to shut the plant down. We decided for general safety reasons to shut down," Brumfield said.

The NRC spokesman in Bethesda said the leak was very similar to one in January at the Ginna nuclear plant in Ontario, N.Y., about 16 miles northeast of Rochester. That leak was caused by a ruptured tube in the plant's steam generator.

Brumfield said it would take about a week before workmen could enter the containment building where the reactor is located to make assessments and repairs. The leak and shutdown occurred two days before the plant was scheduled to be shut down for routine maintenance.

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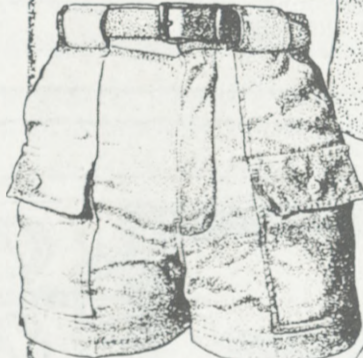
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