

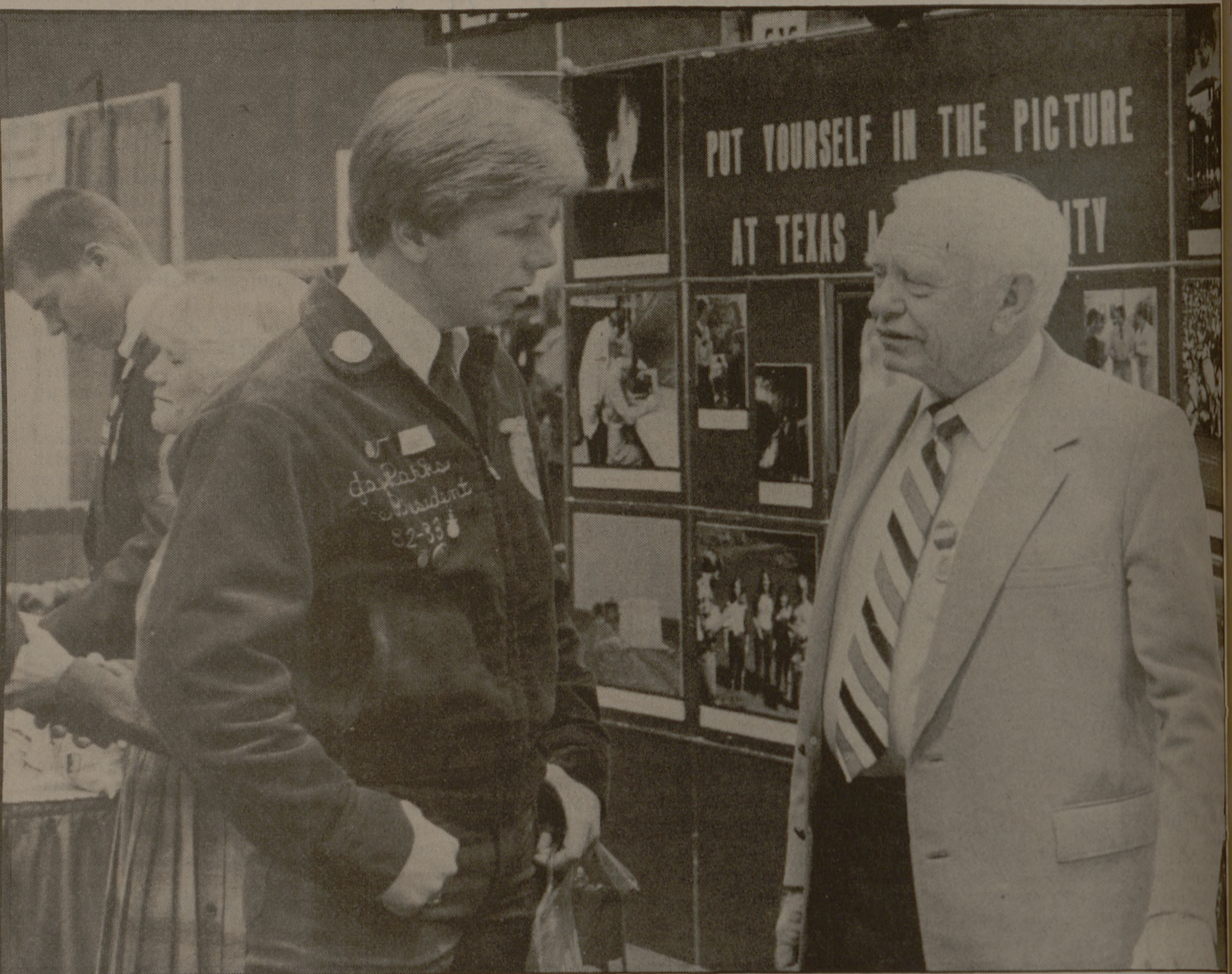
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Darlene Henderson, Battalion photo

And then there's the 12th Man...

Dr. Potts, professor emeritus of soil and crop sciences, talks to Ray Parks a high school senior from Columbia, considering

attending Texas A&M. Both participated in the National FFA Convention in Kansas City, Nov. 9-12.

Official says nuke accident inquiry ought to continue

United Press International

DALLAS — A former Pennsylvania state health official Monday called for another look at a possible link between an increase in newborn deaths and the 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear reactor accident.

Dr. Gaylor MacLeod told members of the American Public Health Association, meeting this week in Dallas, that an independent, privately-funded research group should try to find

out why infant deaths dramatically increased for a brief period just before and after the time of the accident.

MacLeod said that state health statistics show newborn deaths in a 10-mile area surrounding the utility roughly doubled between January and June of 1979. The plant's crucial coolant water — which prevents the core from overheating — leaked from Three Mile Island's Unit 2 reactor on March 28, 1979.

The figures show that for the six-month period in 1979, 36.5 infant deaths occurred per 1,000 live births. But during the same time the year before the accident, only 16.2 deaths occur-

red per 1,000 live births.

MacLeod, who was serving as Pennsylvania Secretary of Health at that time, said he believed a new investigation of health effects from the accident is in order because of the new Harrisburg, Penn., grand jury indictment.

The Nov. 7 indictment charges Metropolitan Edison Company with a manipulating and lying about leak rate data submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The panel also found the Met Ed engaged in a pattern of criminal misconduct, and systematically destroyed records that would have disclosed the correct test results.

"Last week's indictment against the Metropolitan Edison

Co., the owners of the nuclear power plant on Three Mile Island, states that radiation leak rate data were falsified in the months prior to the accident," said MacLeod, who is now a professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh.

MacLeod also said private researchers "without pressures or coercion" should examine whether the incidence of infant hypothyroidism downwind from the plant was 12 times higher than historic levels after the accident. At least half of the cases, he charged, have never been satisfactorily explained by federal and state researchers.

"The discovery of very low levels of radioactive contamination in mouse, rat and rabbit droppings on Three Mile Island during the early cleanup process is an omen not to be ignored," MacLeod warned. "In all probabilities, the increased cancer incidence will be difficult if not impossible to measure."

Noting his concern about the lack of medical researchers in nuclear power development, MacLeod also advocated requiring that at least two of the first member-Nuclear Regulatory Commission be licensed physicians.



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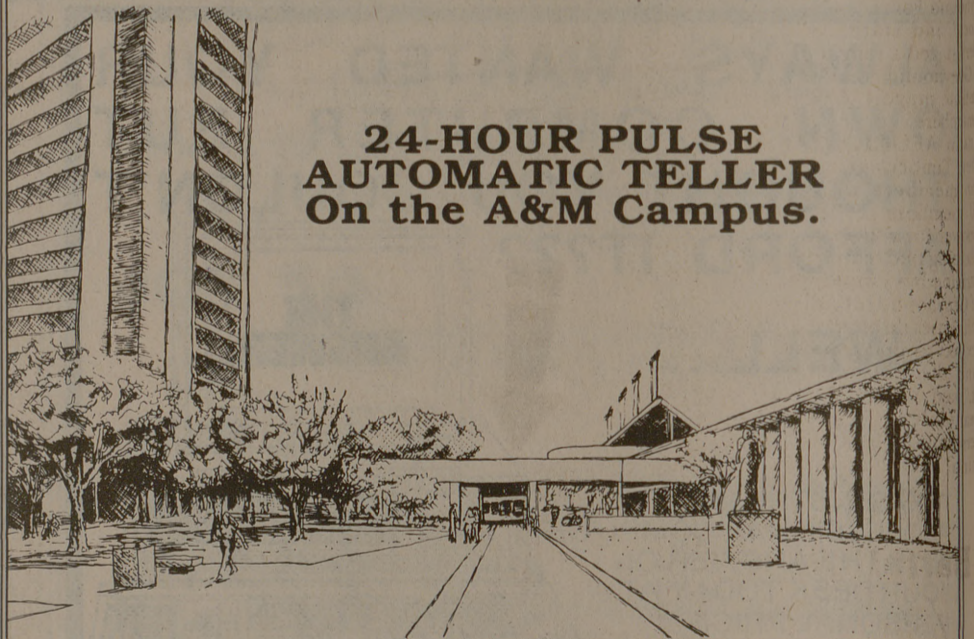
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