

Response

NUCLEAR POWER

I do wish that Dr. Peter Hodgson could be just a little less sure of himself than he seems to be on nuclear power. In a booklet published by the Oxford University Press in 1985 he said:

Those opposed to nuclear power say that the consequences of a nuclear accident are so horrific that we are not justified in taking even a very small risk. This question is partly answered by recent studies of reactor accidents. These studies show that it is physically and chemically impossible for reactors to spread huge quantities of radioactivity over the surrounding countryside, as was at one time feared. Most of it is trapped in and near the reactor itself. The worst disasters described by the anti-nuclear lobby just cannot happen because they are contrary to the laws of physics and chemistry.

Within not many months of this definitive pronouncement there came the calamity of Chernobyl.

Bruce Kent

*Dr. Peter Hodgson's original article appeared in the
February issue of New Blackfriars.*

For Catherine (Siena, Edinburgh, Avignon)

1.
Your blood and Christ's blood running together, month
after month in a cinder-room under the stairs.
Grandparents fell asleep in soaked earth, a friend
walked the ghost road that dissolves in water. Years

when the end of the book rang like a chasm
and crowds of folk clambered to meet
their dire destruction just once more. Back
from the grave one message echoed in hoofbeats:

We love you, will carry you further — a name
written in blood on the cloud's brow.
Take the road that opens beyond the gate
as smooth as water from a flooded house.

Between the resurrection and the vanishing
don't count one difficult day.
A sharp intake of mist in the throat
breathes out your April into May.