



Photograph by Fabian Buchrach.

A handwritten signature in black ink, written in a cursive style. The signature appears to read "John D. Callahan".

Louis Harry Roddis, Jr.

1918-1991

By John W. Simpson

LOUIS H. RODDIS, JR., naval officer, engineer, and business executive died on September 15, 1991, in Charleston, South Carolina, at the age of seventy-three. At the time of his death he was a private energy consultant and was a director of the Detroit Edison Company, Hammermill Paper Company, Gould Inc., and Research Cottrell Inc.

Roddis was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1967 after a distinguished career in the U.S. Navy, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), and private industry.

Lou, the son of Louis Harry and Winifred Emily (Stiles) Roddis, was born in Charleston, South Carolina. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1939, having the distinction of standing number one in his class each of the four years. Upon graduating he saw sea duty with the U.S. Navy in the Pacific and was in action at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. In 1942 he was directed to take graduate studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After receiving his master of science degree in engineering, he was assigned to the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard.

After serving on Joint Task Force I, which was conducting atomic weapons tests in the Bikini Atoll, he joined the group of naval officers that included Admiral (then Captain) Rickover at the Clinton Laboratories of the Manhattan Engineer District (later the Oak Ridge National Laboratory).

He served directly under Rickover as project officer during the development, design, and construction of the nuclear powered submarines *Nautilus* and *Sea Wolf*. He played a major role in the development of those submarines as well as in the first U.S. central station nuclear plant at Shippingport, Pennsylvania. His was often a voice of calm and reason in a frequently frenetic atmosphere during the development of the nuclear engines for the *Nautilus*.

In 1955 he resigned as an officer in the U.S. Navy to become deputy director of the Reactor Development Division of the AEC. In this capacity he had responsibilities for both the naval and civilian reactor development programs. He helped originate the nuclear rocket project, the nuclear ship *Savannah*, the nuclear safety program, and the civilian power demonstration program.

In July 1958 he left the AEC to become president of Pennsylvania Electric Company, a subsidiary of General Public Utilities Corporation (GPU). In that capacity he directed the construction of the world's first 500-kilovolt transmission line, an achievement that resulted in the company receiving the Edison Award of the Edison Electric Institute in 1962.

In 1967 Lou became chairman of the board of Pennsylvania Electric Company and a member of the CPU corporate staff. As director of nuclear activities, he was responsible for the development of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Plant of the Jersey Central Power and Light Company, the Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant of the Metropolitan Edison Company, the first breeder reactor plant of Pennsylvania Electric, and the Saxton Nuclear Experimental Corporation plant.

Roddis next became vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees, Consolidated Edison and then president of Consolidated Edison, a position that he held until August 1973. After leaving Consolidated Edison he became president and chief executive officer of John J. McMullen Associates, Inc., a company engaged in naval architecture and marine engineering.

After 1976 Roddis was a private energy consultant with a large and varied list of clients, including many major corporations, U.S. national laboratories, the National Security Council, the

National Science Foundation, the President's Advisory Council on Energy Research and Development, and many other federal government agencies, as well as serving on the corporate boards mentioned earlier.

Lou was a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Royal Institute of Naval Architects, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the American Nuclear Society. He also was a director of the Edison Electric Institute and the American Gas Association. He was a registered professional engineer in South Carolina, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia and a chartered engineer in the United Kingdom.

He was president of the Atomic Industrial Forum from 1962 to 1964 and was elected president of the American Nuclear Society in 1969. He also was a member of the Department of Energy's Energy Research Advisory Board and its chairman for several years and chairman of the Maritime Research Advisory Board of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

In 1958 he received the Arthur S. Fleming Award in the scientific and technical field for outstanding men in government, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission Outstanding Service Award in 1957, and the Department of Energy's Exceptional Service Award in 1984.

Lou also was a board member of a large number of civic, educational, philanthropic, environmental, and religious organizations.