From: "Don Corman" <dcorman1@maine.rr.com>
To: "Brian Hughes" <BXH1@nrc.gov>
Date: 3/20/02 1:25PM
Subject: RE: Nuclear Plant Security YT020020024

Dear Brian,

Thank you for the call regarding my suggestion of BARRAGE BALLOONS and CABLE TOWERS as a low cost, low tech interim solution to Nuclear Power Plant Security.

I was very surprised (and pleased) to receive an actual voice response, however I was not as verbal about the idea as I had hoped. (I work nights, I jumped up from a deep sleep to take your call, not a very resourceful moment for me!)

While I am confident that the NRC is working hard for a solution, I wish to ADDEND my comments to you yesterday. Now with enough resourcefulness to support this suggestion properly.

I still believe that the idea of creating a PHYSICAL aircraft barrier around these plants, designed to DEFLECT the trajectory of an inbound aircraft makes sense. I understand that the containment structures of these plants is often shielded in 4 feet of concrete (Perhaps more)

However, the kinetic energy of a speeding jetliner could potentially crumble these structures.
(As a former U.S.M.C. Anti-Tank Assault Gunner, I know that the projectile does not even need to penetrate the concrete to cause grievous damage inside. The sheer force of the impact causes a phenomenon where the energy is transferred through the concrete causing the interior to explode violently. We (the Marines) used this law of physics as a method of anti-tank warfare.)

Trying to protect the reactor with AA guns, Air Patrols etc, could be effective, but EXORBITANTLY Expensive, also, we have learned throughout history that when you build a better countermeasure, your enemy will build a better counter-countermeasure, if not a new approach altogether.

Creating a physical barrier, not to stop a plane, but to DEFLECT its trajectory [eliminating a possible "direct hit"] with a series of cables, towers and balloons Ironically, this idea would also create some short term jobs for unemployed Americans. The steel for the cables can be purchased from our struggling domestic steel industry. The rubber for the balloons could come from Firestone, who received an unfair portion of the blame for the fact that Ford couldn’t design a vehicle capable of surviving a tire blow-out (chuckle) (Sorry, I had to add that one)

In the future, a more pervasive shield of cables could be strung from permanent towers. A virtual web of cable and material designed to make a straight-in impact nearly impossible.

A low tech solution, to a low tech enemy. Once in place, the balloons/ towers would require relatively little maintenance (Consider: a SUSPENSION BRIDGE)

The breeching of the protective barriers around our REACTORS should take priority, as the long term death toll exceeds most other potential power station attacks. While DAMS and NATURAL GAS can cause immediate and massive destruction, only our Nuclear plants have the ability to kill for generations.

ATTACHED: Sketches/ Diagrams to assist VISUALIZATION of this concept.

Never has the job of the folks at the NRC been more critical. I trust that you all will rise to the challenge of protecting our great country.

God Bless America, (and thanks for listening!),

Respectfully,

Don Corman
751 Main St. #118
South Portland, ME 04106
207-879-4055
www.dacmedia.com
dac@dacmedia.com

P.S.: Due to the incredible importance of your jobs, there is no need to respond to this e-mail. I have stated my case, and turn over the decisions to the experts.

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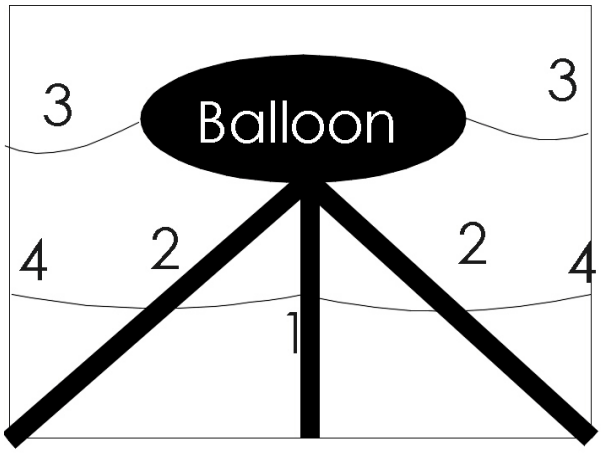
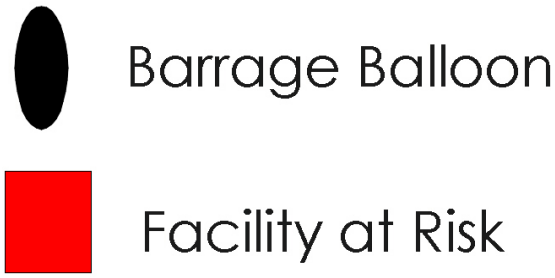
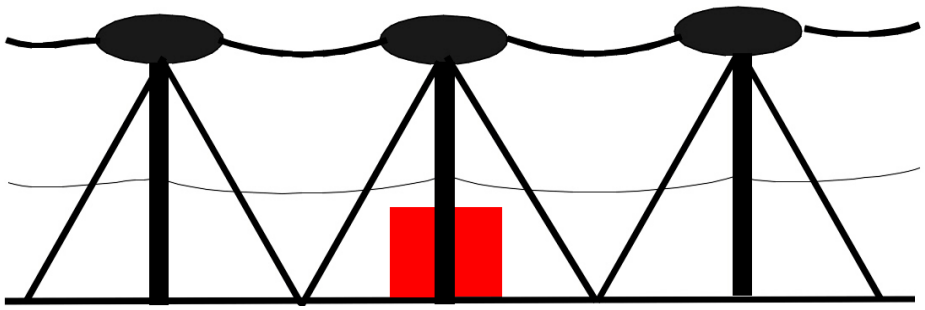
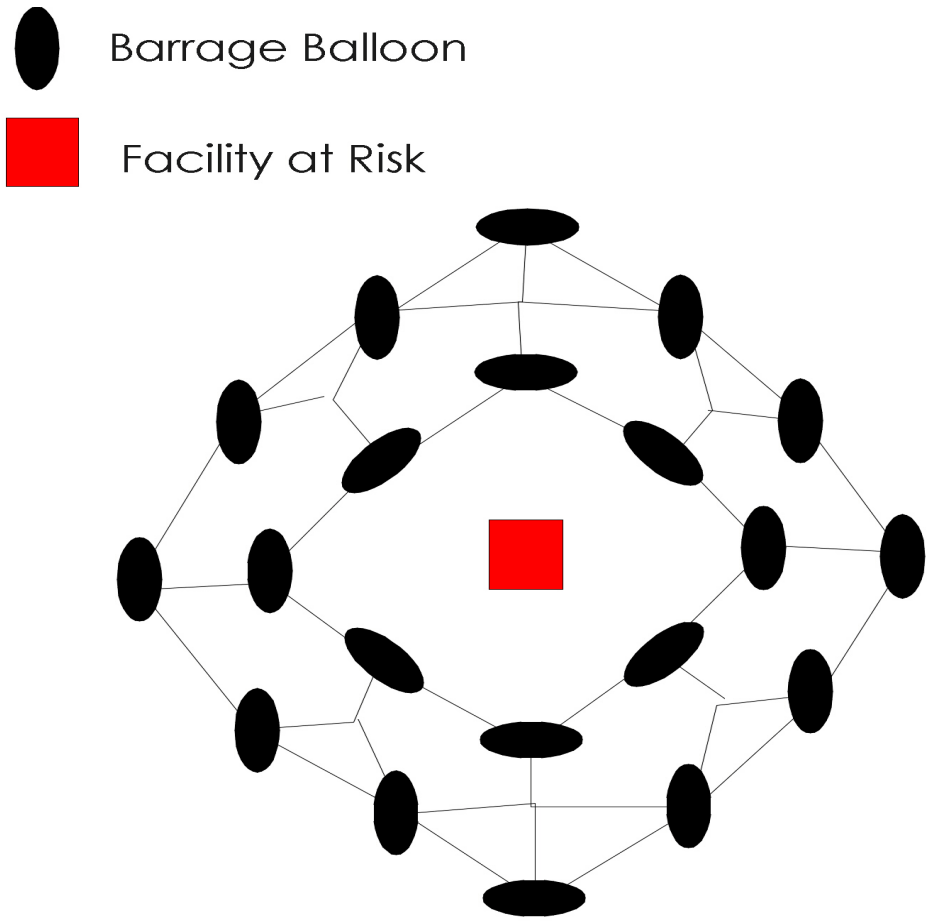




Side view detail of possible cabling for an individual balloon.

1. Anchor Cable
2. GuideCables
3. Additional Obstacle cables
4. Intermediary cables





TOP VIEW OF A SIMPLE BARRAGE BALLOON PATTERN.

Remember: The goal is to make a head-on trajectory difficult or impossible. I do not have the expertiseto design an efficient lay-out.