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NDA

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In reply please refer to: C-5679

June 24, 1959

United States Atomic Energy Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

ATTENTION: Division of Licensing and
Regulation

Gentlemen:

This is in comment on the Notice of Proposed Rule Making (10 CFR) Power and Test Reactors, published in the Federal Register May 23, 1959.

The disclaimers of adequate knowledge on which to base possible site criteria for evaluation of proposed sites is entirely appropriate and fully appreciated. The intent of the Commission to exercise discretion and consider each reactor site problem on a case-by-case basis is also appropriate and appreciated. These factors notwithstanding, citing quantitative requirements in a formal ruling will, we believe, deny the AEC the prerogative to the exercise of flexibility it desires.

For example, paragraph (c) states in part: "It is usually desirable that the reactor should be several miles distant from the nearest town or city and for large reactors a distance of 10 to 20 miles from large cities." Present knowledge of reactor operation, the aftermath of excursions, and the effectiveness of containment devices makes such numbers arbitrary. The distances cited may be too great or too small, yet by placing them in the rules now, vested interest in these particular numbers will tend to grow up. It seems unnecessary to prejudice future flexibility to this degree at this time. The total number of proposed sites to be evaluated is still well within manageable proportions on a case-by-case basis.

It is our conclusion that the proposed rule is entirely appropriate as an internal document for the guidance of the Division of Licensing and Regulation and the statutory Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. We would see no objection to widespread distribution of the proposed criteria for the guidance of possible licensees. We can see no advantage, and suspect possible serious future disadvantage, from formalizing these criteria by publication in the Federal Register.

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[Signature]

June 24, 1959

We recommend the elimination of the following sentences in the proposed rule:

"b. For any power or test reactor, a minimum radius on the order of one-quarter mile will usually be found necessary. For large power reactors a minimum exclusion radius on the order of one-half to three-quarter miles may be required. Test reactors may require a larger exclusion area than power reactors of the same power.

"c. and for large reactors a distance of 10 to 20 miles from large cities. Where there is a prevailing wind direction it is usually desirable to avoid locating a power or test reactor within several miles upwind from centers of population."

Sincerely yours,

Walter A. Hamilton

Walter A. Hamilton
Contracts Director