

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: DUE: 10/28/03

EDO CONTROL: G20030604  
DOC DT: 09/25/03  
FINAL REPLY:

Senator Mitch McConnell

TO:

Rathbun, OCA

FOR SIGNATURE OF :

\*\* GRN \*\*

CRC NO: 03-0658

Travers, EDO

DESC:

ROUTING:

Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant [REDACTED]

Travers *7c*  
Norry  
Paperiello  
Kane  
Collins  
Dean  
Burns/Cyr  
Virgilio, NMSS

DATE: 10/06/03

ASSIGNED TO:

CONTACT:

RIII

Caldwell

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Information in this record was deleted  
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Act, exemptions *7c*  
FOIA-2006-0186

*D-1*

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

Date Printed: Oct 03, 2003 10:06

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**PAPER NUMBER:** LTR-03-0658 **LOGGING DATE:** 10/03/2003  
**ACTION OFFICE:** EDO  
**AUTHOR:** Sen.  
Rep. Mitch McConnell  
**AFFILIATION:** SEN  
**ADDRESSEE:** Dennis Rathbun  
**SUBJECT:** Concerns labor relations at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant  
**ACTION:** Signature of EDO  
**DISTRIBUTION:** Chairman, Comrs, OCA to Ack  
**LETTER DATE:** 09/25/2003  
**ACKNOWLEDGED:** No  
**SPECIAL HANDLING:**  
**NOTES:**  
**FILE LOCATION:** ADAMS  
**DATE DUE:** 10/28/2003 **DATE SIGNED:**

MITCH McCONNELL  
KENTUCKY

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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1702  
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## United States Senate

MAJORITY WHIP  
COMMITTEES:  
AGRICULTURE  
APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOREIGN OPERATIONS  
CHAIRMAN  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

September 25, 2003

Mr. Dennis Rathbun  
Director  
Office of Congressional Affairs  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
One White Flint North Building 11555  
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Mr. Rathbun:

I am writing on behalf of a constituent who has contacted me regarding labor relations at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. I would appreciate your review and response to my constituent's concerns.

I have enclosed a copy of my constituent's correspondence, for your information. Please direct any inquiries and all relevant information to Kinda Hall in my Washington, D.C. office.

Thank you for your time and assistance. I will look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,



MITCH McCONNELL  
UNITED STATES SENATOR

MM/klh

Senator McConnell,

Enclosed <sup>with 7</sup> you will find a copy of a letter that I presented to the N.R.C. Senior Resident Inspector at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The letter is an attempt on my part to notify the N.R.C. that we now have a "post-strike" fear and intimidation culture present inside the facility that needs to be addressed. It is my genuine concern that the "brow beating" instances now directed toward union members have undermined any confidence that individuals had to report issues of any type; NRC, Safety, Environmental, etc; without fear of retaliation.

I was given an opportunity to speak via phone to an N.R.C., manager for our Region. The manager was very receptive to my concerns, but quick to point out that the N.R.C. has very defined lines that determine when intervention is necessary. She went on to say that without specific instances to reference, corrective actions would become difficult. My concern to her and to you is that if workers do not feel safe in reporting issues to the regulator, then how will the regulator ever get any issues to evaluate? My concern at this time is the culture within the plant; not of specific issues.

I am not sure that you are in a position to help, but I thought that I should inform you of the current situation inside the facility. This situation has got to be corrected very soon.

Sincerely,

Ex,  
7c

To: Bruce Bartlett  
Senior NRC Inspector  
PGDP facility

Mr. Bartlett,

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of my intent to file a formal complaint with the N.R.C. concerning issues of harassment and intimidation from my department management. Please note the attached letter given to Mr. Ron Wetherell, PGDP Employee Concerns Manager.

While I fully understand that violations of a labor contract do not result in N.R.C. intervention, I feel it is necessary to state that those actions, and others noted in the attachment given to Mr. Wetherell are respective of a managerial "I can do anything to you that I want" atmosphere. This workplace environment has significantly compromised my comfort-ability, and the comfort of others, to report any concerns of N.R.C. significance, without first having to weigh the repercussions that will accompany such actions.

In today's post-strike environment, I fit my department's definition of a troublemaker. I used to write ATR's and address safety issues, I was not afraid to report what my management did not want reported. I simply told what they wanted kept quiet. At that time, I could do so with confidence that retaliation would not be tolerated. Today, I am no longer comfortable with doing that. To speak out now would bring certain retaliation. Since management now has a "free hand" to deal with perceived "troublemakers" in any matter they choose, people such as myself who used to report issues are no longer secure in doing so. This is simply unacceptable. If you silence those willing to talk by instilling fear, who will be left to speak out when issues are discovered?

At this point in time, I simply feel that retaliation, harassment, and possibly unjust termination could now be the result if I were to file such a report, especially if it reflected negatively on my management. Furthermore, I believe that the "Strong arm" managerial atmosphere that currently inhabits our facility would preclude many people from reporting N.R.C. issues. In fact, I am extremely uncomfortable writing this document, but I no longer feel as though I have any choice. There is no doubt in my mind that I will suffer as a result of even documenting my concern with the N.R.C. site office, but someone has to come forward. I guess that will be left to me.

If this culture is allowed to exist, and senior management is unwilling to address the issue, we will have digressed back in time to a place we do not want to be. U.S.E.C. corporate management has apparently decided that this is an acceptable practice and has allowed such an environment to exist. This allows local management to operate on a production first philosophy while steadfastly claiming otherwise. This current situation was not in existence a year ago, so it is safe to assume it is a byproduct of the new managerial philosophy concerning the return of striking union members. Local management seems confident that returning to work union members won't risk their employment by speaking out. This philosophy is totally unacceptable and requires immediate intervention by an outside investigative agency.

Respectfully,  
[ ] EX.  
7c

cc: Ken O'Brien, Regional Director  
Senator Mitch McConnell  
Senator Jim Bunning  
Congressman Ed Whitfield  
Bryant and Kautz, P.S.C.