



UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

54-247

MAR 14 1969

Honorable William F. Ryan
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of February 6, 1969, enclosing a letter to you from Mr. Larry Bogart, Director of the Anti-Pollution League, in which he suggests that nuclear power plants be equipped with public warning signals and utilities be required to distribute warning circulars.

An applicant for an operating license for a nuclear power plant is required to submit to the AEC regulatory staff his plans for coping with emergencies, in accordance with Section 50.34, Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 50. As part of the evaluation of the applicant's emergency preparedness planning, the staff reviews the applicant's provisions for establishing and maintaining contact with local and state authorities who might be called upon in the extremely unlikely event of an accident at the facility that could have consequences off site. Since the authority to order evacuation of the local area or to impose other protective measures resides with these local authorities and not with the applicant, we determine that a plan exists in which the applicant notifies, assists and advises such groups regarding the extent of any accident which might affect the public and the desirability of initiating protective action such as evacuation. We require that the necessary liaison between the applicant and such local groups be established and maintained by the applicant as part of his emergency preparedness planning. Consolidated Edison maintains such liaison as part of its emergency plan for the Indian Point site.

The assertion that the Consolidated Edison Company "has no warning or alarm system" is misleading. Although it is true that the Indian Point facility does not employ the type of public warning signal advocated by Mr. Bogart, the plant possesses extensive instrumentation to detect the occurrence of malfunctions and to monitor plant conditions in an accident situation.

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The determination of the most desirable action to take in the unlikely event of an accident involves many factors, including the nature of the accident that has occurred and the prevailing environmental conditions. Variable factors such as these argue against the desirability of a single standard public warning signal or a circular such as Mr. Bogart proposes, since an unflexible evacuation plan might not be the most desirable protective measure.

Cordially,

1st Glenn T. Seaborg

Chairman

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