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JAN 5 1977

Docket Nos. 50-3, 247
and 50-286

Miss Sarah Hynes
219 Coachlight Square
Montrose, New York 10548

Dear Miss Hynes:

This is in reply to your letter (with enclosure) of December 11, 1976 concerned with the affects of the cooling towers planned for the Indian Point Nuclear Plant.

The concerns you raise have been analyzed in the preparation of the draft and final environmental statement (FES) related to selection of the Preferred Closed Cycle Cooling System at Indian Point Unit No. 2 (NUREG-0042) issued in August, 1976. A copy of this document is enclosed for your use.

After issuance of the FES a public hearing was held before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (Board) which issued its initial decision on November 30, 1976, approving the selection of a natural draft tower as the preferred system.

Aesthetics of cooling towers are presented in detail in section 6.3.3.3 (p.6-75ff) of the FES. The aesthetic impact of the natural draft cooling tower is more severe than from some of the other types of towers. However, this impact is counterbalanced when advantages of the natural draft cooling tower are considered. Thus, cloud and precipitation formation (section 5.1.1 of the FES) fogging and icing (section 5.1.2) and drift and salt deposition (section 5.1.3) and terrestrial impacts (section 5.2) favor the natural draft tower. On balance, the Board found the preferred system to be the natural draft tower.

One of the considerations which entered into the evaluation is the loss of generating capability due to the cooling tower. This and related data may be found summarized in the FES in table 6-17(p.5-25).

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With regard to PCB's, the State of New York Department of Environmental Conservation has supplied data on PCB's and other toxic materials (table 2, p. B-47 of the FES). Both the NRC staff and the State agree that airborne metal contaminants and potentially toxic materials will not exceed nor even approach threshold limit valves (p. S-27).

The potential use of waste heat at Indian Point is addressed on p. 8-24 of the FES where it is concluded to be impractical. In addition, during the recent hearing, the City of Peekskill presented a report of its own study, "A Search for Alternatives to the Proposed Cooling Towers at Indian Point," February 27, 1976. This report confirms the impracticability of the use of waste heat at Indian Point.

The towers are required at Indian Point to mitigate impacts of the cooling system on the ecosystem of the Hudson River; this requirement was placed on the utility after protracted research and public hearings during which all aspects of the problem were aired and given serious consideration.

We believe that the foregoing discussion demonstrates that the evaluation of cooling systems, analysis of their impacts and the balancing required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) has been adequately done and that a moratorium on cooling tower construction is not warranted.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
R. P. Geckler

George W. Knighton, Chief
Environmental Projects Branch No. 1
Division of Site Safety
and Environmental Analysis

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