

No. 75-1311

Logging Date 3/2/76

NRC SECRETARIAT

TO:  Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exec. Dir./Oper. \_\_\_\_\_  Gen. Counsel \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cong. Liaison \_\_\_\_\_  Solicitor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Public Affairs \_\_\_\_\_  Secretary \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Incoming: Kenneth A. Lazarus, Associate Counsel to the President.  
 From: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Prof. William H. Hensey Date 2/24

Subject: Referring Hensey's letter to the President re siting of nuclear power plants to the Chairman, NRC.

Prepare reply for signature of: Suspense  
 Chairman DATE DUE COMMISSION: March 16  
 Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
 EDO, GC, CL, SOL, PA, SECY  
 Signature block omitted  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Return original of incoming with response

For direct reply\*  
 For appropriate action  
 For information  
 For recommendation

Rec'd Off. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date 3/4/76  
 Time 9:15

Remarks: Copy of incoming to Chairman Anders, OGC, PA, OCA, PE, Cmrs.

RF

For the Commission: [Signature]

\*Send three (3) copies of reply to Secy Mail Facility



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 24, 1976

Dear Mr. Hensey:

Thank you very much for your letter of January 31, 1976, to the President concerning the siting of nuclear power plants in California.

The responsibility for licensing of commercial nuclear power plants is now vested in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, an independent regulatory agency that was established in January 1975. That agency is responsible for evaluating safety, environmental, and other aspects of nuclear power plants.

We have forwarded your letter to the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for his consideration.

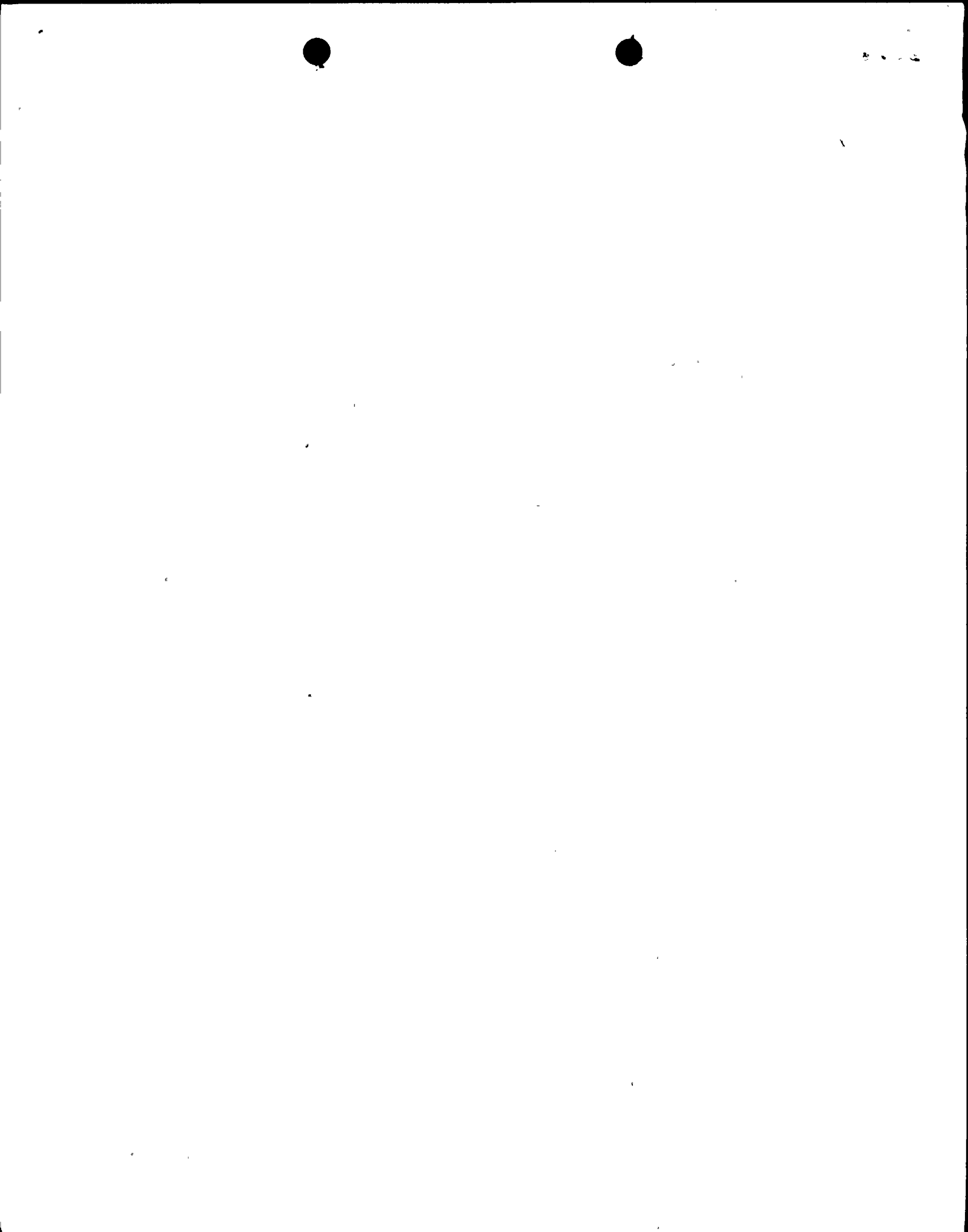
Sincerely,

*S*  
Kenneth A. Lazarus  
Associate Counsel  
to the President

Professor William H. Hensey, Jr.  
4550 Franklin Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90027

cc: NRC

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17  
Prof. William H. Hensey, Jr  
4550 Franklin Ave.  
Los Angeles, California 90027  
January 31, 1976

President Gerald Ford  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. (Copies to Sen. Cranston and Tunney)

My dear Mr. President,

As professor of California History for some 20 years, teaching about California's tragedies (avoidable and unavoidable alike!) and triumphs, I would like to register an URGENT word of premonition and concern about the developing scandal of the reckless siting of California nuclear plants.

The scandal has suddenly deepened, as the press brought to light in recent days, the hushed-up fact that P G & E's new reactor is sited within TWO AND A HALF MILES of an active earthquake fault 200 miles long: (the San Simeon). See attached press clips).

How could the State and Federal licensing agencies be so careless?

Worse yet, Mr. President, this exposé comes on top of the previous incredible licensing of two new plants at San Onofre (near Mr. Nixon's home) in the midst of a notorious multiple earthquake fault zone! (The only large stone Mission Church the Padres built in California, was near there, at San Juan. A terrible quake smashed it in 1812, killing 40 worshippers! Two quakes near there hit the headlines within the last 18 months!)

It is claimed that the authorities "didn't know" about the San Simeon Fault.. But I have discovered that they DID KNOW about the quake danger at San Onofre ! I read these words in the AEC's Licensing Directorate's own federal report! --

"...the (San Onofre) plant site is...60 miles from the San Andreas Fault, 45 miles from the San Jacinto Fault, 23 miles from the Whittier-Elsinore Fault, 18 miles from the Newport-Inglewood Fault, 7 miles from the South-Coast Offshore (fault) zone, and one-half mile from the Cristianitos fault..." ("Safety Evaluation of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station Units No. 2 & 3" pages C-8, 4; C-9, 9; C-15, 11; C-19, 2).

Mr. President, as you recall, I am sure, the Newport-Inglewood and South Coast Offshore faults were associated with the wrecking of Long Beach in the quake of 1933!..

Is not all this recklessness in licensing of sites, asking for trouble? Tax-payers, rate-payers, stockholders and voters would be affected by the millions if a quake incident frightened the public into abandoning these plants so close to fault lines!

Could you please use the prestige of your high office to see that this matter is thoroughly reviewed and investigated and remedied? Perhaps the agencies involved can adopt more careful policies.

With very great respect, and with a deep sense of urgency,

William H. Hensey, Jr.





# Fate of Atom Plant in Doubt

## Offshore Fault More Perilous Than Believed

BY LARRY PRYOR  
Times Staff Writer

SAN LUIS OBISPO—An active fault zone offshore from two large nuclear reactors that are nearing completion here has turned out to be more potentially dangerous than previously suspected, raising doubts about how or if the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant can be licensed.

Recent studies indicate that the fault, called the Hosgri Fault Zone, is

far longer and younger than had been believed.

U.S. Geological Survey scientists think the fault is active and could unleash an earthquake of up to 7.5 magnitude on the Richter scale. The plant was originally designed to withstand a hypothetical earthquake of 6.75 directly beneath the facility, Pacific Gas and Electric Co. officials said.

This and other differences between the design of the plant and continu-

ing revelations about the offshore geology are likely to lead to a delay in operation of the plant, officials of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission said.

Moreover if PG&E, the owner of the facility, is not able to satisfy NRC, the two units may have to be reconstructed before a license can be issued.

"There is a probability it can be resolved, and yet, it may not," said R. C. DeYoung, an NRC official with the division of reactor licensing.

"It's possible that no license will be issued," said another NRC official. However, both federal and PG&E officials were optimistic that the reactors could eventually be used.

The two units are being built at a cost of \$925 million. The first is 96% complete and the second is 60% complete.

One was expected to be operational by August of this year and the other by the same month next year.

Permission to build the two units was granted by the former Atomic Energy Commission in December, 1970, when the nearest active fault was believed to be 20 miles away.

As an added measure of conservatism, PG&E said it designed the plant to withstand a 6.75 earthquake directly underneath it, and with ground acceleration forces of 0.5 gravities.

But an oil survey crew in 1971 discovered a fault zone about five miles offshore. Subsequent mapping by USGS geologists and PG&E consultants showed it to be a substantial and active fault zone.

At the same time, USGS scientists began to focus attention on other possible consequences of a massive earthquake offshore, questions involving the velocity of ground waves

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and the duration of the quake.

These were not considered as important when the plant was being designed.

"We only looked at ground acceleration, which was wrong," said a USGS seismologist. "It was a mistake."

Construction on the reactors continued after the offshore fault was discovered.

Supplements to the NRC's Safety Analysis Report on the units said as recently as last September that the analysis of the Hosgri Fault could not be completed because of a lack of information.

Further analysis by USGS showed that the fault passed as close as 2.5 miles to the reactor site. Government geologists also concluded that an earthquake of 7.3 magnitude reported in 1927 took place on the Hosgri Fault. From this they deduced that an earthquake of 7.0 to 7.5 could be anticipated off the Diablo Canyon site.

Then in December, Science magazine published an article by Clarence A. Hall Jr., chairman of UCLA's geology department, that showed the Hosgri Fault is 80 to 150 miles long and has undergone 50 miles of movement, some quite recently.

"The fault is looking like a big lulu," said Hall in an interview, "and I've been just conservative."

His article concluded that the San Simeon-Hosgri Fault system, as he called it, "could be a potential hazard to any engineered structure located along the coast from San Simeon south to the vicinity of Purissima Point."

A reference to the Diablo Canyon Plant was removed from Hall's original text by the USGS, which had funded his work. Hall said he was told that reference to the plant "did not contribute to the science of the report."



2-14-54