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May 25, 1983

Darrell Eisenhut
Director of Licensing
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory
Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Darrell:

On behalf of the Joint Intervenors to the Diablo Canyon licensing proceeding, I am writing to express our alarm in reading a recent news report in the San Luis Obispo County Telegram-Tribune. According to the May 10, 1983 report (see attached article), a Pacific Gas and Electric Company ("PGandE") spokesman indicated that PGandE officials had seen preliminary drafts of a still-uncompleted NRC investigation report into charges by two former quality control personnel of quality assurance violations at Diablo Canyon. He assured the reporter that the drafts identified no major problems at Diablo. Three days later, on May 13, that same representative attempted a retraction, stating that he was incorrect and that PGandE had not reviewed preliminary drafts of the NRC's report.

We are seriously concerned that once again PGandE may be receiving access to preliminary drafts of critical, supposedly independent reports. As should have been made crystal clear in early 1982 after disclosure of PGandE's editing of preliminary drafts of the Cloud Report, such access by the utility being investigated is not only highly inappropriate, but it makes a mockery of the principle of independence which is essential if the investigations and conclusions described in the reports are to be taken seriously. Moreover, particularly in as vigorously contested a proceeding as this one, access by PGandE to preliminary findings -- either through review of draft reports or discussions with the investigating entity -- undermines even the appearance of fairness to other parties and, more

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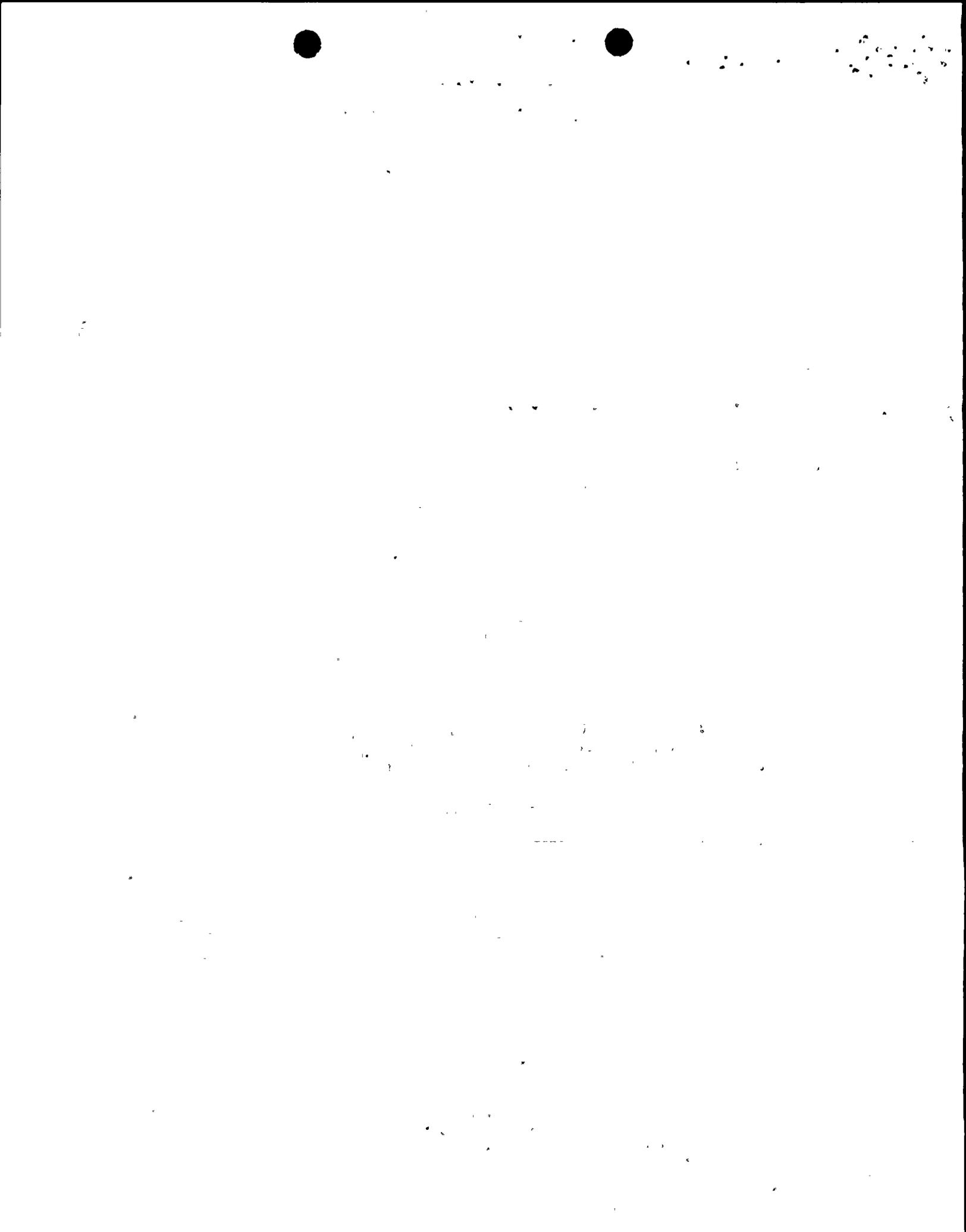
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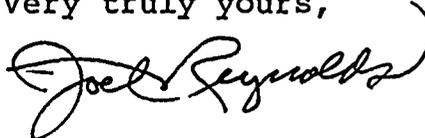
Darrell Eisenhut
Director of Licensing
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importantly, suggests that the paramount interest of the residents of San Luis Obispo County in safety may again be taking a back seat to the short-term interests and convenience of PGandE. Public confidence in Diablo Canyon demands independence, and independence cannot be ensured if PGandE is reviewing draft NRC investigation reports.

We do not know which of the statements of the PGandE representative is accurate. However, we believe it is incumbent upon -- and we hereby request -- the NRC to investigate the matter to determine the facts and take all actions necessary to ensure that such improper access, if it occurred, will not happen in the future.

On behalf of the Joint Intervenors, I request that you give this matter your prompt attention.

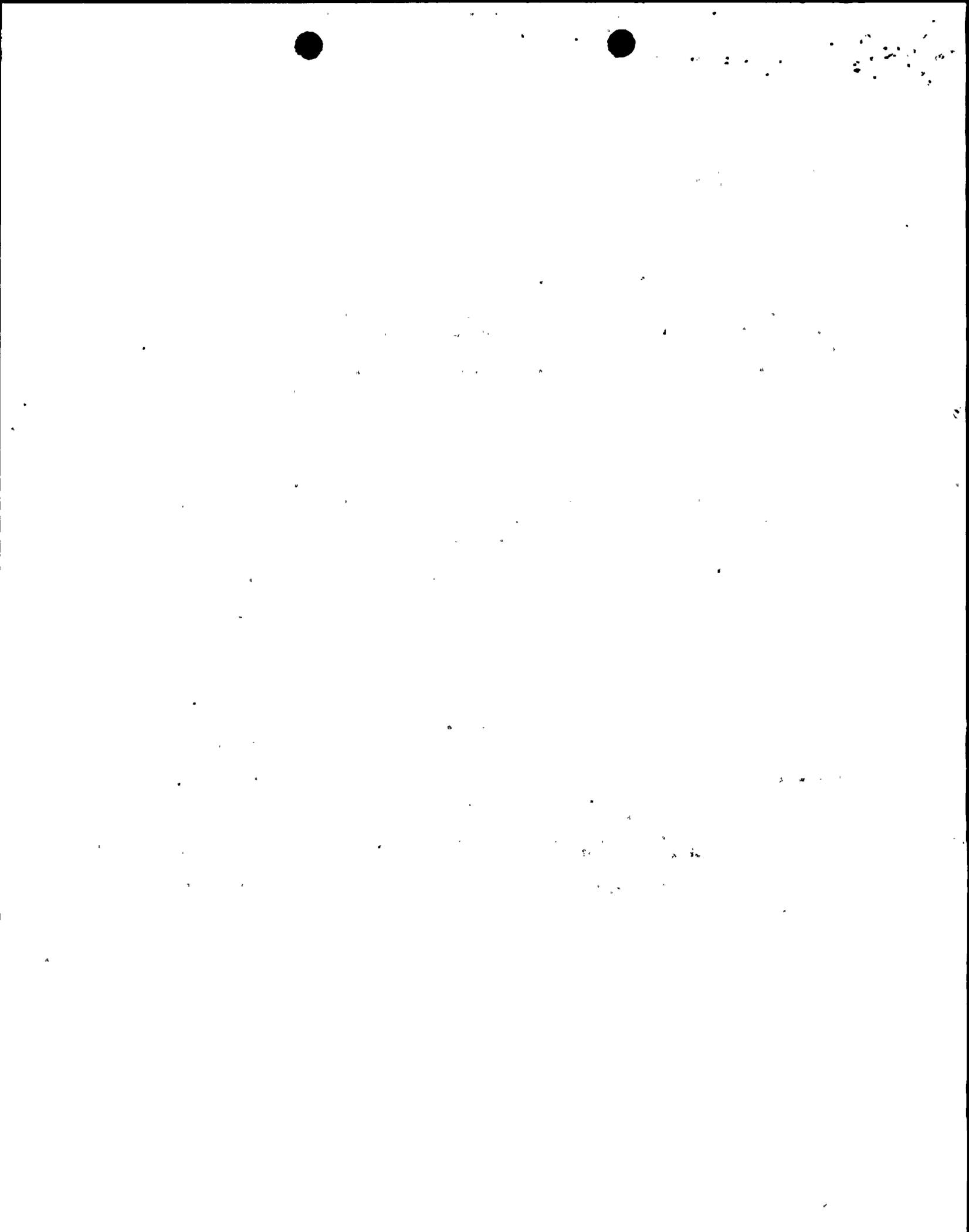
Very truly yours,



Joel R. Reynolds
Counsel to the Joint Intervenors

JRR:av

cc: NRC Commissioners
Harold Denton
Diablo Canyon Service List
Rep. Morris Udall
Rep. Leon Panetta
Rep. Edward Markey



Telegram-Tribune

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY ★ 25¢ PER COPY 22 PAGES 114TH YEAR NO. 236 TUESDAY, MAY 10, 1983

Ex-Diablo inspector hits quality control

By Carl Neiburger
Staff Writer

Red tags marking work deficiencies at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant were improperly pulled to speed construction, a former plant inspection supervisor has told Nuclear Regulatory Commission investigators.

Virgil H. Tennyson, who until March 3 was in charge of quality control at Foley Electric Corp., a major Diablo subcontractor, also expressed uncertainty about how qualified some of his employees were to do their jobs.

Pacific Gas and Electric Co. representative George C. Sarkisian said the red tag problem involved only a minor deviation from procedures and said the inspectors were all properly qualified.

The NRC is expected to issue a report on its investigation of the charges later this week. But Sarkisian said PG&E officials have already seen preliminary drafts of the report which, he said, identifies no major problems at Diablo.

Tennyson's comments were released Monday by the NRC in a transcript of an interview made under oath. Tennyson had earlier told lawyers for the state Attorney General's Office that he had been under pressure to speed inspections at the nuclear plant.

Tennyson was fired March 3 in a dispute over quality control procedures being violated.

In the March 25 transcript, Tennyson reaffirmed that he was repeatedly threatened during his eight years at Foley and was "told many times that I was a neces-

sary evil."

He said his supervisor told him, "If we didn't keep the red tags down and if we didn't keep this job rolling, we were going to be more or less thrown off the job and another company would possibly take over."

The red tags were used to mark construction deficiencies such as welding problems and were left in place until the deficiencies were resolved, Tennyson said.

He said that early this year a new night assistant manager was assigned to work under him.

Tennyson testified: "I wouldn't pull the red tags down, and somehow (Tennyson's boss) had instructed the night assistant manager to pull them, and I came back in the next day and found a stack of red tags which had been pulled in violation of the

procedure and stuck into the shelf in the quality manager's office."

Sarkisian said the red tags were from areas where problems had been corrected but paperwork documenting the corrections hadn't been completed. He said that while their removal was a technical violation, Diablo procedures have since been changed to allow it.

Tennyson said that until the beginning of this year his inspectors were never required to pass any formal qualification test.

"Under the conditions (we) were working (under), ... we felt that we could indoctrinate them well enough to follow procedure, which is all they were required to do at the time..."

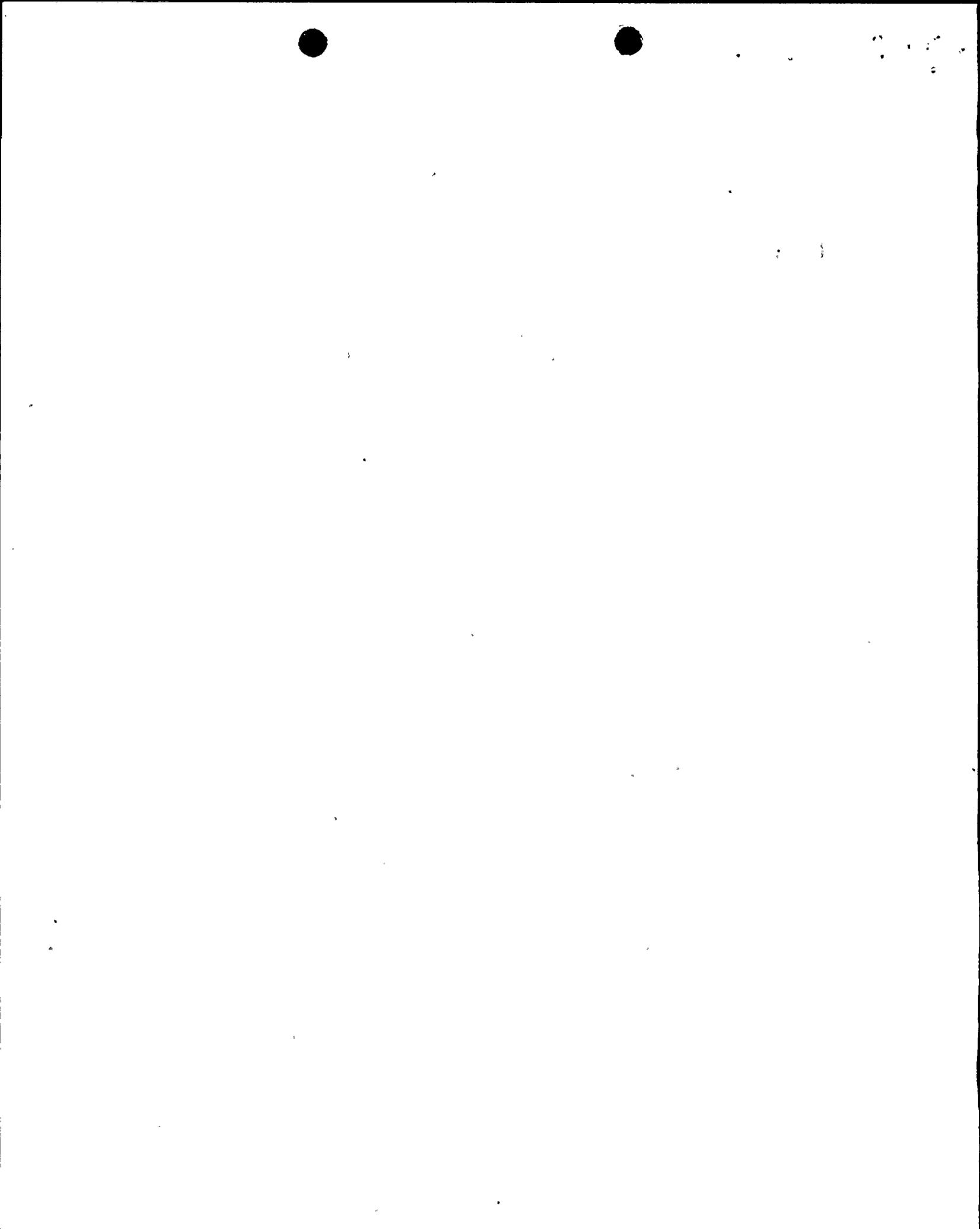
He said that starting in January 1983, with an increase in construction work,

"there were so many people ... hired and so much confusion in trying to indoctrinate them all...."

The increased work also increased the inspectors work, Tennyson said: "There was so much confusion that there were a lot of mistakes, and this is what brought the pressure down on the (Quality Control) Department because they were noting these mistakes as they came up, and it was slowing the project down."

Sarkisian took issue with Tennyson's claims: "We have established procedures that meet all of the requirements for that construction site," he said.

"The people are hired accordingly and they are trained accordingly, and we have the best qualified people that we can find at that construction site."



2 more problems at Diablo

Engineers find thin-walled pipe & leaky weld

Pacific Gas and Electric Co. officials are reexamining piping at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant after finding a leak in one pipe and discovering that the wall of another is too thin to meet engineering specifications.

The thin-walled pipe is one of the main lines carrying cooling water to the nuclear plant's unit 1 reactor, Nuclear Regulatory Commission Construction Branch Chief Tom Bishop said today.

Bishop said PG&E engineers discovered the pipe wall near a weld was one-fifteenth of an inch thinner than the minimum code requirements.

"The measured wall thickness ... is approximately 2.15 inches, an NRC report on the problem said. "Code required minimum wall

thickness is 2.215 inches."

PG&E reported the stainless steel pipe may have been ground thinner than allowed in 1975 or 1976 when its surface was ground smooth to prepare it for ultrasonic testing.

Bishop said PG&E plans to test 14 other sections of pipe during the next three or four weeks to look for similar problems.

The second problem involves a leaky weld discovered on a prefabricated section of pipe in the nuclear plant's component cooling water system, which circulates water to cool machinery, said PG&E representative Richard P. Davin.

He said the leak was discovered by a welder who was attaching a reinforcement pad at the

junction of a 3-inch and a 20-inch pipe.

Davin said PG&E engineers now believe the weld may have been damaged when the reinforcement was being attached, but they aren't sure yet.

Meanwhile, PG&E representative George C. Sarkisian said Thursday he was incorrect when he said earlier this week that PG&E had reviewed preliminary drafts of an NRC report investigating charges of quality control problems at the nuclear plant.

Sarkisian said PG&E has concluded, however, based on internal investigations, that charges made by a former construction quality control supervisor at the Diablo plant revealed no serious problems.

