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APR 26 1979

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MEMORANDUM FOR: FILE

FROM: R. O. Meyer, Leader, Reactor Fuels Section, CPB, DSS

SUBJECT: COMMUNICATIONS RELATED TO TMI-2

I have been called three times (the latest was last night, April 24, at home) by Stan Benjamin of Associated Press to talk about our Core Damage Assessment for TMI-2 (R.O. Meyer memo to R.J. Mattson dated April 13, 1979). Benjamin was primarily interested in how close TMI-2 came to core melt. I explained that the fear of core melt was primarily related to large fission product releases from fuel pellets (not necessarily from the plant), and that, since we knew that about 30% of the fission products had been released from the pellets, it really didn't matter if some of that had come from localized regions of molten fuel. Nevertheless, I said, we thought that peak fuel temperatures remained 600 to 800 C below the melting point of UO₂.

Benjamin asked many questions of clarification about the April 13 report (e.g. we talked at length about radial temperature profiles in fuel pellets during full-power operation and in TMI-2 at 2 hr into the accident).

We talked about the possible melting of spacer grid, guide tube, and control rod materials. And I mentioned the possible melting of partly oxidized Zircaloy cladding, as in the German tests, in response to his question about any new discussions on the subject since the April 13 report.

Earlier (forgot the dates) I had two calls from the Attorney General of New York (I was never sure whether I talked to the Attorney General or a staff assistant). He wanted basic tutorial information on fission products (e.g., that they have half lives and that some of them are mobile). I explained that I was not the best source of information on fission product hazards, but he said he just wanted basic information so he could understand comments being received in his office.

Original signed by
R. O. Meyer

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