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NL Nuclear

IN REPLY REFER TO NT - 2168

August 14, 1979



Secretary of the Commission
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

SUBJECT: 10 CFR Part 73 - Interim Final Rule - Physical Protection
of Irradiated Reactor Fuel in Transit

Gentlemen:

I am writing to express my concern about the decision of the NRC to modify 10 CFR 73 to require safeguard measures to be applied to spent fuel shipments. I strongly believe the Commission has not thoroughly evaluated the need for this extension of safeguards to spent fuel nor the impact of these regulations on the nuclear industry.

Briefly, I feel the advanced notice of shipments and the re-routing around areas of our 100,000 population (embargoed areas) plays into the hands of any potential terrorist. The terrorist will know routes, shipment timing, and now may select a remote area more conducive to sabotage such as sites far removed from quick police response. Secondly, we know our interstate road systems are our most safe routes and re-routing can only take away from safety in transit. Finally, the interim final rule could double the cost of transportation, which further increases the cost of energy to the consuming public.

May I recommend that the Commission withdraw totally the application of 10 CFR 73 to shipment of spent fuel. We have transported spent fuels for over 15 years, where emphasis on safety, good judgment, and planning have a proven record of success.

Sincerely,

NL INDUSTRIES, INC.

George L. Stukenbroeker
Manager, Nuclear Transportation

GLS/amc

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