

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD
OF CRAFTSMEN, PROFESSIONALS
AND ALLIED TRADES



Local Lodge No.101

POOR ORIGINAL

October 25, 1979

Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 "H" Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

ATT: Mr. Joseph M. Hendrie
Chairman

Dear Sir:

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Once again I am writing your department to complain of what we consider unnecessary, unsafe working conditions that personnel involved in decontamination are being subjected to.

I also must question the propriety of your office not implementing security checks and a thorough professional training program for employees involved in this line of work.

It seems strange that to be a "qualified boilermaker, steamfitter and even a common laborer, one must serve a minimum of four (4) years apprenticeship" and yet your regulatory agency has been entrusted with the protection of the public, which I would assume includes these workers, fails to require any official training.

Workers who perform this potentially hazardous work are paid as little as \$2.90 per hour and are forced to work twelve (12) hours per day.

While I am cognizant of the fact that it is not your agency's duty to determine workers wages or conditions, I do feel you have a very positive duty to establish and enforce that utilities require vendors that supply these workers to be responsible bidders and that they supply workers who have more than a six or eight hour course before being employed in positions which could prove hazardous to themselves and others.

A perfect example of what I am referring to is demonstrated by the recent award of a decontamination service contract at Indian Point Nuclear Facility owned and operated by the Power Authority State of New York.

This contractor VIKEM INC. of Massachusetts deliberately and with full knowledge discharged thousands of gallons of radio-active contaminated waste water at this same facility in 1978.

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We and others complained to "responsible" individuals of PASNY, that in future bidding, their irresponsibility should be considered.

To our amazement, our communication was not even answered!
And guess who was the successful bidder on the present outage?
VIKEM INC.

If you or your inspectors would investigate the employees now on site, you will find that the vast majority of these "decontamination technicians" have no prior experience in nuclear decontamination.

Could you explain to me why you, or a nuclear facility, would use totally unskilled workers when there are many technicians available with years of experience? And please explain how this is in the best safety of the public to employ the least experienced workers.

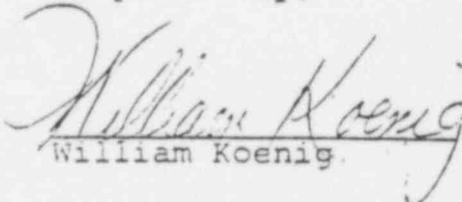
I have in the past written the Nuclear Regulatory Commission asking to be kept abreast of any and all new or pending requirements relating to the decontamination trade or "Heath Phycist". To date, I have received nothing. In this same communication I also offered my organizations services or input as to some of the improvements that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission could implement to improve the quality and assure the quality of workers engaged in this field.

Also I would like to remind you that when the Three Mile incident occurred, our union in a lengthy telegram offered you and or the facility our list and services of experienced decontamination personnel, but was never requested to furnish one person. This seems strange since recent news articles have related that vendors are taking people who have never even seen a Nuclear Power Plant, yet alone worked in one!

Perhaps our problems are in communications, as I am hopeful our goals are a common one; to provide safe Nuclear Power and the same safe Nuclear Maintenance to these facilities.

While I am aware of the immense case load your agency handles, the priority of my inquiries being answered would be most appreciated.

Respectfully,


William Koenig

WK:ms

Comm. Ross..Dept. of Labor
cc: Sen. Jacob K. Javits
Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan
Sen. Caesar Trunzo
Assoc. Press..Rick Pieniack

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