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United States Senate

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AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND
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GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

PROD. & UTIL. FAC. 50-313

November 29, 1979

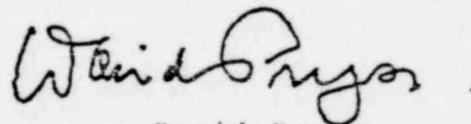
Mr. Joseph H. Hendrie
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Hendrie:

I am enclosing for your information a copy of a letter I have recently received from Mr. Bill Peters of Russellville, Arkansas, regarding a concern he has expressed about the way the Nuclear Regulatory Commission conducted a public meeting in regards to its inspection of the emergency planning of Arkansas Nuclear One.

Mr. Peters has made a number of comments which I believe merit your consideration. I would appreciate it if you would review these comments and advise me of any actions or decisions which may be pertinent. Your reply will enable me to become more knowledgeable on this matter, and provide my constituent with an informed response.

Sincerely,



David Pryor

DP/rr
Enclosure



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November 8, 1979

The Honorable David Pryor
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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Dear Senator Pryor:

I just attended the one-hour "public meeting" held by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in regard to its inspection of the emergency planning of Arkansas Nuclear One. From the way it was scheduled, one would think the NRC was actually attempting to discourage public participation instead of being interested in hearing from the people affected by its actions. I would like to express my criticism and suggest changes in future public meetings by the NRC during these and other inspections.

- (1) Not enough notice to the public: The NRC provided a press release to the media approximately two weeks ago, announcing that its team would be in town and that the public would be invited to all sessions. I suppose that the NRC assumed our local media would be efficient enough to pass this information on to the general public. Until I called our local newspaper the morning before the public hearing and requested that they publish the time of that meeting, there had been absolutely no times or places given for any of the meetings open to the public. I suggest the NRC follow up on its news releases and request that the media announce schedules.
- (2) Public meeting held at the end of schedule: The public had no opportunity to voice their opinions in the earlier scheduled meetings. I feel that because the public is directly affected, they should have input before the NRC is finished with its proceedings with the utility. For example, the NRC had no idea that rural Arkansas had hundreds of families without electricity, telephones, or good roads to their houses, and they were only able to receive this information after their sessions with the utility when it was to no avail. I suggest that the NRC schedule the public meeting some time between its meetings with the utility, instead of after its business with the utility is finished.
- (3) Public meeting scheduled at poor time of day: Most people in Arkansas have jobs and are expected to be at these jobs to make a living. The public meeting today was held at 1:00 in the afternoon and many people who wanted to attend were unable because of their job requirements. I suggest that the NRC schedule public meetings in the evening and night when more people would have an opportunity to attend.

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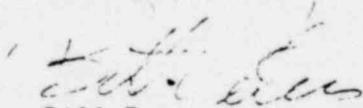
November 8, 1979

(4) Not enough time for public meeting: Only one hour was allotted to this only opportunity for the public to personally approach the Nuclear Regulatory Commission with questions and comments. This is NOT enough time! Lack of communication is one of the greatest problems we have today in any business or organization. The NRC apparently feels that communication with the general public is insignificant because of this very brief time given for this meeting. I requested more time, only to hear the worn-out excuse, "Sorry, I've got to catch a plane." We were given the address of an NRC official, and were told we could write our questions to him for answers. This is not satisfactory! I suggest that the NRC not only schedule their meetings at a more appropriate time as mentioned above, but also expand the meeting to up to four (4) hours, as they do with their sessions with the utility.

The NRC will be making future inspections of other plants, and will be returning to Russellville. I feel that the above four requests are in order and that with your input, the NRC will comply. Will you please make every effort to see that the general public is given ample opportunity to express its views to the NRC on its scheduled visits to communities affected by nuclear power plants.

Thank you for your assistance.

Cordially yours,


Bill Peters

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