



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

PDR

DEC 17 1979

The Honorable Wendell Ford
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Ford:

This is in response to your letter to Chairman Hendrie regarding the Marble Hill facility. Since the Commission may sit in an adjudicatory capacity during the licensing decision process for this facility, it is not appropriate for the Chairman to comment, and he has referred your letter to me for reply.

The Commission has considered the question of to what distance protective actions, such as evacuation should be preplanned. In this regard, the Commission has recently endorsed the recommendations of an EPA/NRC task force which calls for establishment of two Emergency Planning Zones (EPZs) around nuclear power plants. A copy of the policy statement and the background document are enclosed. The EPZ for airborne exposure (for which preplanned action, including evacuation, is appropriate) has a radius of about 10 miles; the EPZ for contaminated food has a radius of 50 miles. In the case of the Marble Hill plant, preplanning for evacuation of the Louisville area would not be indicated.

As indicated during the Chairman's appearance before the House Energy and Power Subcommittee, we are concerned with plants which present particular evacuation problems within about 10 miles and where a large population is at risk. We have not yet systematically examined the sites at which plants are under construction in this regard. The operating facilities identified to date for further study are the Indian Point Station Units 2 and 3 in New York and the Zion Station Units 1 and 2 in Illinois.

A review group has recently been formed within the NRC to consider the need for additional measures to further reduce the probability and consequences of a severe accident at these facilities. Actions to be considered by this review group will include implementation of TMI-2 lessons learned items on a priority basis and improved operator qualification and training. Also, system design changes that would reduce the amount of radioactivity released or would delay such releases will also be considered. Although this review is now limited to the Indian Point Station Units 2 and 3 and the Zion Station Units 1 and 2, other facilities may be considered in the future.

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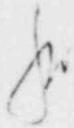
The Honorable Wendell Ford

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I trust this has been responsive to your questions.

Sincerely,

Original signed by R. G. Smith



Lee V. Gossick
Executive Director for Operations

Enclosure:
Policy Statement
NUREG-0396

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