NRC PDR

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

MAY 09 1979

Mr. Robert E. Simpson
3425 St. Leonards Court
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Dear Mr. Simpson:

This is in response to your letter regarding the orders by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on March 13, 1979, to shut down five nuclear power plants in the eastern United States because of questions about the ability of their piping systems to withstand earthquakes.

Shortly before those orders were issued, it became apparent to NRC staff that analysis techniques which had been used in the seismic design of safety-related piping for these five plants were not in accord with proven and generally accepted engineering practice. The result could be overstressing of piping and supports for earthquakes which could reasonably be expected to occur during the lifetimes of these plants. The eastern United States is generally believed to be a region of low seismicity, when compared to the western part of the country, but is not without significant historical seismic activity.

Some of the piping systems involved could, if failure occurred, cause loss of coolant to the nuclear reactor. In addition, systems needed to shut the plant down safely in that event could also be affected. Thus, an earthquake of not extremely low likelihood would have the potential for causing an accident and for preventing operation of safety systems designed to cope with the accident.

Our objective is to review the situation in an expedited and disciplined manner so that these plants can be returned to operation with assurance that this will not constitute a threat to the public health and safety.

Sincerely,

Harold R. Denton

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

9500400 3

7906230047

3/16/79

NRC SECRETARIAT

TO:
- ☐ Commissioner — Date
- ☐ Exec Dir Oper
- ☐ Cong Liaison
- XXX Public Affairs
- ☐ Gen Counsel
- ☐ Solicitor
- ☐ Secretary
- ☐ _____

Incoming: Robert Simpson
From: 3425 St. Leonards Court
Silver Spring, Md. 20906
To: Chairman Hendrie Date: 3/15/79
Subject: Expresses concerns re: shutdown of 5 reactors for seismic issue reasons

- ☐ Prepare reply for signature of:
  - ☐ Chairman
  - ☐ Commissioner _____
  - ☐ EDO, GC, CL, SOL, PA, SECY
  - ☐ Signature block omitted
  - ☐ _____
  - ☐ Return original of incoming with response

XXX For direct reply* ☒ Suspense: March 26

- ☐ For appropriate action
- ☐ For information
- ☐ For recommendation

Remarks: _____

For the Commission: Combs

*Send three (3) copies of reply to Secy Mail Facility

NRC 62 ACTION SLIP

95004004

7906230056

NRR

Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory
Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Concerning the NRC's recent "regulatory decision" to close down certain Eastern nuclear Power plants due to earthquake-liable plumbing - has the agency considered the probability of the hazards of a "falling star"? A direct hit by a meteor could be devastating!

Your agency's close-down couldn't of been better planned to assure an energy crisis! - If I may be so bold to offer a suggestion that would still let the NRC carry out its mandate, why not overhaul the plumbing of these plants during the refueling shutdown? (My agency exercises such discretion! We too are regulators.) I'll just bet that the East will not have an earthquake this millennium! The benefit of nuclear energy far outweighs the risk of an earthquake shaking the plumbing!

The NRC is supposed to be an Our side! Turn the forces back on!

Concerned citizen,
Robert C. Simpson
3425 St. Leonard Ct
Silver Spring, Md 20906

95004005