



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

October 4, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Richard DeYoung, Deputy NRC Staff Director
FROM: William Parler, Task Leader, Group 1
SUBJECT: QUESTIONS FOR MR. BENDER, ACRS

I request that someone ask Mr. Bender questions at the SIG's October 6, 1979 meeting with the ACRS on the background set forth below.

Background

Mr. Bender in the August 16, 1979 issue of Nucleonics Week is purported to have said:

"Bender said there is too little to motivate the industry to do a good job on safety. 'People at the top of business are not there to protect the public, they are there to protect their money,' he said. The question, he said, is how to make 'safety a motivator' for top management. Kerr (also an ACRS member) disagreed, in part, observing that 'motivation for safety varies from utility to utility. Some in industry are highly motivated on safety.'"

Mr. Bender's statement touches on a matter of general relevance to Group 1's work - the tensions between safety and economic considerations. It bears more specifically on the rush to commercial operations issue.

Although the questions are fairly apparent, the areas which should be probed include:

- Why does he think this?
- Does he have specific examples in the commercial nuclear power area?
- Is there a corporate management attitude to ignore safety?
- Is there, in his judgment, a financial incentive to ignore safety matters relating to a commercial nuclear power plant?
- Where are these incentives most likely to be the greatest -
 - o at the design stage?
 - o during construction?
 - o during start-up tests and ascension to power?
 - o assuring that the plant is declared to be in commercial operation by a certain date?
 - o maintenance and repairs?
 - o training?

William Parler, Task Leader, Group 1

Enclosure:
Excerpt from N/W, 8/16/79, p. 12

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CORPORATE MANAGEMENT ATTITUDE? IS THERE A FINANCIAL INCENTIVE TO IGNORE SAFETY?

cess, saying "more attention is given to legal and procedural questions than to safety."
ACRS itself will come in for scrutiny in the report. Several members said the committee is trying to do too much and has spread itself too thin. "We are increasing the breadth of our activities without decreasing the depth," Siess observed.

Industry received a mixed review on its technical safety performance. Bender said there is too little to motivate the industry to do a good job on safety. "People at the top of businesses are not there to protect the public, they are there to protect their money," he said. The question, he said, is how to make "safety a motivator" for top management. Kerr disagreed, in part, observing that "motivation for safety varies from utility to utility. Some in industry are highly motivated on safety."

ACRS, as part of the discussion, also reviewed the NRC progress on siting criteria and examined the question of whether some utilities might be technically unfit to operate nuclear power plants.

SPAIN'S NUCLEAR LINEUP HAS TIPPED IN FAVOR OF VALDECABALLEROS-1 AND -2, plus Trillo-1, as the next three units to be licensed for startup by 1987. The energy plan approved last month provides for at least three new nuclear units on line by then. For the past several months it was widely assumed that these would be Vandellos-2, Trillo-1 and Valdecaballeros-1. Technical considerations aside, this would give an even spread among suppliers, with General Electric, Westinghouse and Kraftwerk Union providing one unit each.

Official sources now say that Vandellos-2, a 1,000-Mw Westinghouse unit, will probably have to wait until next year for final licensing. The three units are expected to be authorized by October. Valdecaballeros-1 and -2 are GE units and Trillo-1 is supplied by KWU. "We don't base our studies on multinational or political considerations," says a Ministry of Industry source. "If Valdecaballeros-2 is in the first group of three, this is for reasons of siting and capital investment." The twin Valdecaballeros units are located in the south near Badajoz, an area with comparatively little antinuclear activity. In terms of capital investment to date, this plant ranks second after Trillo-1.

However, the president of Extremadura's regional government, Luis Ramallo, has requested Premier Adolfo Suarez to delay licensing of Valdecaballeros-1 and -2 until local authorities decide on the viability of the twin 1,000-Mw nuclear units. Ramallo's request is expected to raise a flurry of controversy in government circles, since the regional president is a member of Premier Suarez' UCD Party, which is firmly committed to the government's nuclear program.

This is the first time that a government party man has voiced opposition to any of the nuclear plants under construction or awaiting authorization. Political sources, however, say that the regional government's request will be handled diplomatically, and there is not likely to be a delay in authorizing the Valdecaballeros units.

Ministry of Industry sources say that of the units awaiting licensing, Valdecaballeros-1 and -2 and Trillo-1 are the furthest advanced in clearing government red tape. Westinghouse's Sayago unit is another strong contender for startup if a fourth unit is authorized.

A SLIM MAJORITY OF SWEDES WANT EXPANSION OF THE NATION'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM, according to a survey by an independent foundation, Stiftelsen foer Opinionsanalyser (Foundation for Opinion Analysis). The survey was part of a large study under way on voter attitudes. The foundation was set up last year by a group of university researchers with an aim of making unbiased, independent surveys, and is funded by all political parties, trade unions, employer associations and cooperatives.

The nuclear survey, covering 2,000 people, concluded that 32% want nuclear power totally phased out, 31% want nuclear expanded slowly and carefully to insure safety, 15% want it expanded quickly as long as safety is guaranteed, 6% want it expanded as fast and efficiently as possible, and about 16% gave no answer. This means that 52% want nuclear expanded. The researchers said, however, that "it's clear that the public's views on nuclear power cannot be expressed simply as 'yes' or 'no': the majority wants nuclear power, but this is divided into groups desiring various degrees of safety."

Other questions in the survey showed: 24% of Swedes would be willing to phase out nuclear power even if it meant a weak national economy and unemployment, 29% feel a nuclear phase-out is "highly important," and almost half of the women under 30 want nuclear phased out.

CONGRESSIONAL SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS ON WIPP IN NEW MEXICO LAST WEEK did little to shed light on some of the thorny issues surrounding the project and, instead, seemed to further cloud them. The hearings were held in Albuquerque and Carlsbad Aug. 8-10 by the House Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs' subcommittee on oversight & investigations, chaired by Rep. Harold Runnels (D-N.M.).

A representative of New Mexico Governor Bruce King said the state would insist that the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (Wipp) be licensed by NRC and he decried DOE attempts to shift such responsibility to the state. "We believe it is essential for a first of a kind project like Wipp to be subjected to the most rigorous

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cc: E. K. Cornell
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