

EKC



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

August 15, 1979

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MEMORANDUM FOR: George T. Frampton, Jr.
FROM: R. Chin
SUBJECT: IMPLICATIONS OF MET ED LOSS OF CREDIBILITY

1. Background. In the case of an accident, Met Ed is required to make an accident assessment (including types and quantities of radioactive releases, time available to take protective action) and to notify state and local officials. By Friday morning, Met Ed had lost its credibility which was badly slipping on Friday, and by Saturday Met Ed held its last press conference. This loss of confidence was not limited to media, it spilled over on to local, state and federal officials. As a consequence, an important source of insight into the accident situation was not accorded adequate consideration. This adversely affected the evacuation decisionmaking process at all levels.
2. The President's Commission, in delving into this part of the story, seemed to be more focused on the moral issue of Met Ed/B&W's failure to publically challenge NRC's more conservative view on the bubble and its potential explosiveness than Met Ed's regulatory responsibility to assess and notify. In any event, I believe the subject needs more attention and I am working with Chip Foster (Task Group 4) as follows:
 - a. How, why, and when did Met Ed lose its credibility? Did media give Met Ed a fair shake?
 - b. Did state and NRC actions and public statements underscore Met Ed's credibility?
 - c. To what extent did this loss of credibility affect state and NRC judgments of Met Ed's ability to cope with the accident recovery?
 - d. In retrospect, did the single credible source approach (news management) serve the best interest of all? Would we want to do it again by making it established procedure?
3. We hope to start next week with interviews (fact finding) of a few members of Met Ed's Office of Communications plus those few Met Ed personnel responsible for contacts with media and local officials.

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cc: R. DeYoung
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