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DOCKET NUMBER
PROC. & UTIL. FAC. 70-2623

8005180 763



Mecklenburg County
Board of County Commissioners
Charlotte, North Carolina 28202
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ELISABETH G. HAIR
COMMISSIONER

April 14, 1980



Marshall E. Miller, Esq., Chairman
Atomic Safety Licensing Board
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Miller:

It has been almost a year since you and your Board colleagues met in Charlotte to consider Duke's application to transport spent fuel from the Oconee Nuclear Station to McGuire for interim storage. Some recent developments concern me and I would like to bring this concern to your attention.

The NRC, in dealing with the possibility of sabotaging a spent fuel shipment, required that Duke use alternate routes that would not pass through Charlotte. The proposed routes were to be kept secret, a requirement that seemed unlikely of attainment. The Commissioners ruled against the secrecy requirement. People in towns and cities along the new alternate routes were dismayed and tended to blame Charlotte and Mecklenburg County for their exposure to the possible risks involved in transporting nuclear spent fuel.

I have recently gathered from press reports that the NRC staff has done a turnaround, proposing to the Commissioners a rule that will encourage the use of interstate highways, with the requirement that an armed escort accompany shipments. If the Commissioners approve this proposed new rule, Charlotte-Mecklenburg will be back to square one. I had understood that last year's draft regulations prohibiting shipment through densely populated areas were pretty firm even though subject to comment for thirty days following their issuance. I don't think one has to be a pessimist to consider that a terrorist event is entirely possible. The incidence and seriousness of such events continues to escalate. For example, it seems almost unthinkable that fifty representatives of our government continue to be held hostage in Iran. Students of spreading worldwide terrorism

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predict it will reach new extremes in the U.S. The idea that two armed escorts can protect a shipment of nuclear spent fuel from a group of persons who want to seize it for their own purposes and hold a population hostage or play God as the case may be is not very convincing. Obviously, I am apprehensive about the new provisions developed by the NRC's staff.

I am writing you to express my concern about the current NRC staff proposal that will permit shipments of nuclear spent fuel to move through Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, most populous area in the two Carolinas. Such a proposal automatically presupposes further exposure to our population through the eventual re-shuttling of these wastes to yet another future storage place.

It is my understanding that the use of poison reracking in fuel pools 1 and 2 at Oconee will provide a full core reserve until 1986. Duke officials have demonstrated a flexibility in developing this arrangement that would suggest to a non-professional like myself that they might make further adjustments to avoid moving any spent fuel to McGuire. This certainly would appear more prudent and more sensitive to public health and safety than moving 300 spent fuel shipments from Oconee to short-term storage at McGuire and then, as long-term storage becomes available elsewhere, moving it back through our County again.

Sincerely,

Liz Hair

Elisabeth G. Hair

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