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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE OF REGULATORY OPERATIONS
REGION III
799 ROOSEVELT ROAD
GLEN ELLYN, ILLINOIS 60137

March 19, 1975

J. G. Davis, Deputy Director for Field Operations
Office of Inspection & Enforcement, Headquarters

PROPOSED REPLY TO REPRESENTATIVE MOTTI

In response to your note of March 14, 1975, please find enclosed a proposed reply to Representative Motti concerning the containment liner paint quality problems at Davis Besse.

James G. Keppler
James G. Keppler
Regional Director

Enclosure:
Proposed reply

cc: H. D. Thornburg, IE:HQ
R. Paulus, IE:HQ
R. Warnick, IE:HQ



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Enclosure

Honorable Ronald M. Mottl

United States House of Representatives

Dear Representative Mottl:

We are pleased to respond to your request of February 27, 1975, which transmitted a letter to you from M. W. Schabitzer, dated February 23, 1975. Mr. Schabitzer's letter requested you conduct an investigation into quality related problems that have been experienced at the Toledo Edison Company's Davis-Besse nuclear power plant, which is presently under construction near Port Clinton, Ohio.

In July 1974 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (formerly Atomic Energy Commission) Office of Inspection and Enforcement received allegations concerning the quality assurance program related to the painting of the interior of the reactor containment shell. A prompt investigation conducted by the NRC identified several violations of quality assurance requirements. Since that time, the quality assurance violations have been resolved to our satisfaction; however, the NRC has not approved the painting work.

No work has been done on the painting job since December 1973. Remaining to be completed are the painting of containment shell sections at the top of the structure and repair and repainting of any damaged or flawed areas. Since the plant is still about a year from being operational, there is adequate time for the work to be completed.

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Before the plant can begin operation, the utility must obtain an Operating License from the NRC. Prior to issuing the license, the NRC -- through its inspection program -- must be satisfied that the paint work, as well as the other work at the plant, meets appropriate specifications and standards. The final inspection of the paint work will not take place until later this year after the work is completed.

On the television show, "The Cleveland Connection," there were two areas shown where the paint could be removed. The area where the larger sections of paint could be scraped off was not on the containment shell. It was on a "painters' trolley" at the top of the containment structure; a temporary lug had been cut off the trolley, causing a loosening of the paint. The second area shown in the film, however, was on the vessel wall and paint was shown being scraped off with a knife.

The NRC is concerned that nuclear facilities are built in accordance with applicable standards and requirements. Because of the allegations involving the quality assurance requirements, NRC inspectors will be taking a close look at the actual paint coating of the containment vessel. The Toledo Edison Company will also be required to demonstrate that the paint job is adequate.

The NRC provided a spokesman who was interviewed as part of the television show. A copy of the prepared statement for that interview is enclosed for your use.

We trust that this information will be helpful in responding to Mr. Schabitzer.

Sincerely,

D. F. Knuth

Enclosure:
Above statement