



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

OFFICE OF THE
COMMISSIONER

March 7, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR MILTON S. PLESSET, CHAIRMAN, ACRS

White
As you know the NRC and its contractors are developing the nuclear data link (NDL) concept as part of the TMI Action Plan. That data link would allow the acquisition and display in the NRC Operations Center of a set of nuclear plant data from any operating reactor to guide NRC headquarters actions in emergencies. The Commission will soon have to deal with this question.

I am concerned that installing such a data link and display, however useful in improving the flow of information to support NRC's current role, may at the same time shape NRC's role in an emergency into something other than what is now intended. I would like to have the views of the ACRS on the desirability of installing a NDL and, if it is to be installed, what its characteristics ought to be. In view of the pressing importance of this matter, I would very much appreciate a response within one month.

White
Victor Gilinsky

cc: Chairman Ahearne
Commissioner Kennedy
Commissioner Hendrie
Commissioner Bradford

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

copy to Dickles

May 6, 1980

The Honorable Victor Gilinsky
Commissioner
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Subject: NUCLEAR DATA LINK

Dear Dr. Gilinsky:

In response to your letter of March 7, 1980, the ACRS met with members of the NRC Staff on April 10, 1980 to discuss the proposed Nuclear Data Link (NDL). The Committee also discussed the NDL at its meeting May 1-3, 1980. The Subcommittee on Power and Electrical Systems also met with members of the NRC Staff on April 9, 1980.

You have expressed concern that the NDL may "shape the NRC's role in an emergency into something other than what is now intended." Based on our conversation with members of the NRC Staff, we do not believe the intended role of the NRC is yet well defined. We do not believe that the existence of some type of data link will in itself distort NRC's role.

In our discussions with the Staff, certain activities associated with the functioning of the NRC Operations Center in Bethesda were described which would benefit from some system which would provide a greater variety and more accurate data on plant status and performance than are now available. We agree that some such system should be provided.

The proposed system is likely to be large, expensive to install and operate, and might take ten years to put into operation. We are not convinced that a system this elaborate is needed. We suggest that a less elaborate system be installed at first, involving perhaps only one or a few plants. This would provide some experience with data links and would permit the role of the NRC to be better defined before the final system is specified. It is our view that successful operation of a system that will perform well in an emergency will require a carefully written functional description and related performance specifications.

We recommend that some type of data link be installed, but we suggest that an early installation considerably less elaborate than the one described

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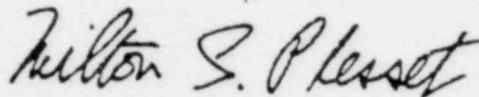
The Honorable Victor Gilinsky

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to us should be installed initially in order to gain experience needed to specify a final system. At the same time, a more specific definition of the role of NRC in an emergency should be developed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Milton S. Plesset".

Milton S. Plesset
Chairman

cc:
Chairman Ahearne
Commissioner Kennedy
Commissioner Hendrie
Commissioner Bradford