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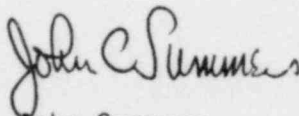
May 12, 1980

Mr. Harold Denton, Director  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Dear Sir:

In a recent "Inside NRC" newsletter, you were quoted as saying because of Three Mile Island the nuclear industry must practice "Excellence of Operations". Here at Shippingport Atomic Power Station we had an essay contest on what each individual felt was "Excellence of Operations" in his job.

One entry that was too broad and philosophical didn't win. I had the good fortune of having it typed for my fellow Reactor Operator who wrote it. I am submitting it to you and President Carter. Hopefully this is what "Excellence of Operations" can eventually mean to us in the nuclear field. I cannot guarantee compliance by all, but it is "food for thought".



John Summers  
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Enclosure

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Since the early days of atomic energy, the industry has been on the defensive over the issue of protection and safety. Spokesmen for the utilities that operate nuclear stations have continuously gone on public record that their plants operate with the utmost concern for public safety. The attitude of the industry, in earlier years, was that the public was overcautious. The excuse was that the public did not realize the great expenditures, in money, time and training, that the utilities were spending to make plants safe. However, the incident at Three Mile Island has shown that the time has come to reassess our own attitudes, rather than to continue to blame the public for the pressures on the industry today.

We cannot afford to make the assumption that nuclear power is safe enough. Each one of us has the responsibility to insure that the job that we perform is as conscientious and thorough as possible. Safe operation of a nuclear plant is a reflection of the integrity and ability of those people who operate and maintain it.

Knowledge is the cornerstone to safe operation; it is the foundation on which we build job performance. The requirement for knowledge and understanding has been exemplified by the integration of systems and degree of complexing in nuclear plants today. Training has always been a basic requirement of specialization. However, if the desire exists for "Excellence in Operations," then the policies of the managements of all nuclear plants should reflect a foremost interest in the continuous training and retraining of all plant personnel. Knowledge is not an optional item in nuclear power; it is the single primary element that must exist before any plant can be operated.

We build job performance on knowledge; however, it is attitude that shapes that performance. Conscientiousness, diligence and the confidence that we are each providing a complete, thorough effort are the tools with which we build "Excellence." This attitude cannot be initiated by management, but rather by the self-respect of each and every individual in the plant. Self-respect is achieved by the fulfillment of a job well done. It is reinforced by the attitude of the management, who must stand behind the work of their people with the philosophy that conscientious work cannot be compromised for any reason. "Excellence" simply cannot be expedited.

Recognition is the final ingredient for "Excellence". A job is not solely something done for compensation. Work is a significant portion of life. When a job well done is recognized by the people you work for, even if only a simple show of gratitude, a person is able to recognize the importance of his work. Good work practices should be stressed by management; however, they should also be recognized and appreciated whenever they occur.

The nuclear industry, as a responsibility to the public, cannot afford anything less than "Excellence in Operations". That responsibility is shared by each and every worker in the industry. The combined efforts of everyone associated with nuclear power can continue to provide the consumers with a reliable source of energy only if we exemplify the principals of "Excellence of Operations".

Charles Eberle  
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