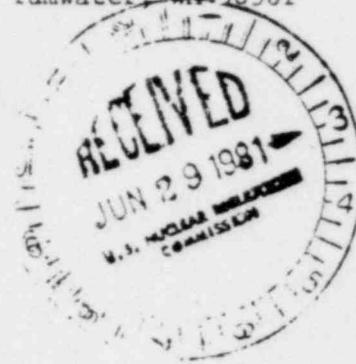


6/25/81

Rich Stocker
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50-254

Project Manager
Quad Cities I & II Nuclear Power Plant
Division of Site Safety and Environmental Analysis
Office of Nuclear Regulation
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555



Dear Project Manager:

On November 7, 1978, I saw a barge accident downstream from Clinton, Iowa. Several fully-laden petrochemical barges ran hard aground and stuck fast. The shifting sand and snags of the Mississippi River bottom had temporarily stopped commerce. There was nothing unusual about this accident— except that it occurred near to and upstream from your Quad Cities I & II facility near Cordova, Illinois.

I am bringing this accident to your attention because the Mississippi River is a heavily used commercial transportation corridor for the bulk hauling of hazardous substances, millions of tons yearly— and accidents do happen frequently enough to justify public concern over the siting of nuclear power plants along this corridor.

Frankly, I am worried. I have carefully studied a number of safety evaluation reports and environmental impact statements of nuclear plants located along navigable bodies of water. In those available at the Federal document depositories I have searched, I have found no discussion of the hazards and possible consequences of shipping large cargoes of dangerous materials past the back doors of nuclear power plants on the nation's rivers. I am disturbed.

And, here's why: in 1977, according to Waterborne Commerce of the United States, 1977, by the Army Corps of Engineers, 396,771,216 tons of cargo were carried on the Mississippi River. A sampling of the hazardous substances included in this total reveals that from approximately one million tons to approximately twenty million tons of the following substances were transported: sulphuric acid; liquefied gases, specifically— LNG, LPG, coal gases, and natural gas liquids; benzene and toluene; various alcohols; sodium hydroxide; nitrogenous chemical fertilizers; basic chemical and product necessities (chlorine, sodium hydride, hydrogen cyanide, etc.); aviation gas; gasoline; distillate fuel oil. Of course many other dangerous materials were carried in substantial quantity; this list is by no means complete. In fact, the Coast Guard lists over 500 potentially dangerous materials and combinations of materials that can burn, poison, explode, and corrode— materials that are carried by barge.

Some of this stuff is going by Quad Cities I & II. I wonder if anyone is keeping an eye on the river? Nothing was spilled in that accident I saw. But, things could have been different. You have lots of plumbing pulling lots of water from the Mississippi into your facility. I know that thousands of tons of corrosives, explosives, poisons, and flammables released in the vicinity of a water intake structure could cause serious damage to that structure and to the facility serviced by it— not good if that facility is a nuclear power plant.

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I am not at all comforted by the fact that you may be able to shut down the Quad Cities I & II water intake system in a matter of minutes or seconds. Some chemicals have much quicker reaction times. Damage could occur quickly.

Damage could, of course, occur by other routes. Are fuel transfer and waste storage facilities and the reactor containment building sufficiently armored to withstand projectiles thrown by riverside explosion of hazardous cargo? I wonder? 25,058 known tons of Department of Defense cargo were carried on the Mississippi River in 1977. Were dangerous munitions going by the back door of Quad Cities I & II without public knowledge? A barge-load of out-of-control heavy ordinance is a nightmare possibility that I do not wish upon you folks, but it is a possibility well worth considering and discussing.

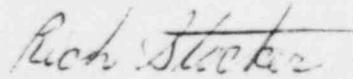
It would be well worth our while to discuss the merits of having NRC people continually informed of the movement of hazardous cargo in the vicinity of nuclear power plants. Cargoes deemed too hazardous should go some other route or have extra-special protection. Perhaps, more barriers need to be erected to protect facilities at nuclear power plants from spills or runaway barges. These many things need to be discussed.

I realize that there is a great deal of impetus behind a multi-billion dollar industry such as the nuclear industry— yet I would hope that the clarity of its analysis of possible hazards to nuclear power plants is not in any way disturbed by that impetus. I hope that you can stop on a dime if necessary. Any major oversights by your safety evaluators could be potentially disastrous. At the present time, I fail to comprehend why the provocative thoughts that I have briefly touched upon did not occur to any of the writers of the safety and environmental reports on waterside nuclear reactors which I have managed to lay my hands upon. I somehow wonder if the writers had actual first hand knowledge of the site or if they were just evaluating information brought to them by others— in which case such oversight becomes more likely.

I hope that you will appreciate my comments and concern. In return, I would like a copy of the Safety Evaluation Report on Quad Cities I & II and also a copy of the Environmental Impact Statement on Quad Cities I & II. Any further publications, comments, or sources of information about waterborne hazards to Quad Cities I & II Nuclear Power Plant, in particular, and other nuclear facilities, in general, which you could send to me would be well used by me. Unfortunately, I have written you this letter in the absence of a great deal of information which could have made my tongue clearer and sharper. It seems that all the Nuclear Regulatory Commission repositories at Federal document depositories between Seattle and Chicago have no copies of environmental or safety reports on file on Quad Cities I & II— strange oversight!

Please reply well; I am wary of bland assurances. My conscience will not let me rest until I have been completely satisfied that large quantities of dangerous barge-carried cargo pose no threat to nuclear power plants on navigable waterways. I await your reply.

Sincerely,



Rich Stocker