

Mid-America Coalition For Energy Alternatives STOD AUTH THE

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October 16, 1978

Joseph M. Hendrie, Chair Victor I. Gilinsky Richard T. Kennedy Peter A. Bradford U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission 1717 H. Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20555



Dear Commissioners:

This is to advise you of a serious potential construction deficiency at the site of the Wolf Creek nuclear power plant, and to ask your immediate action to prevent the possible compounding of a costly error.

The problem involves the concrete in the reactor base mat. A report of your Office of Inspection and Enforcement, Report No. STN 50-482/78-04, states as follows:

"5. Containment Base Mat Ninety-Day Cylinder Breaks

The licensee reported a potential 50.55(e) construction deficiency to the IE inspector on March 15, 1978.

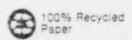
A nonconformance report (NCR), No. 1-0229-C, 3/15/78, reported the compressive strengths of the 90-day cylinder breaks which did not meet the design specification of 5000 psi. Summarized information shows that approximately 57% of the 132 cylinders of the 90-day break test failed to reach 5000 psi. Cylinder set averages not reaching 5000 psi are approximately 50.7%. The licensee is starting a thorough investigation and analysis of the event.

This item is considered unresolved and will be further inspected during a subsequent inspection."

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Nuclear Regulatory Commissioners -- 3

personnel. 10 CFR 50.39 provides:

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"Applications and documents submitted to the Commission in connection with applications may be made available for public inspection in accordance with the provisions of the regulations contained in Part 2 of this chapter."

Of course, "Commission" includes your duly authorized representatives. 10 CFR 50.2(h). And the application in this case is the application for an operating license. 10 CFR 50.56. Accordingly, the regulation clearly supports our right to inspect the nonconformance report.

As we said at the outset, whether a safety problem exists with the concrete in the reactor base mat is still an open question with your agency. But until this question is resolved -- and until the public's right to inspect all the relevant information on the subject is honored, the question cannot be properly resolved -- it may be an extremely costly mistake to permit the installation of the reactor pressure vessel on the base pad. Yet, we understand that the pressure vessel is to be delivered at the site cometime this month. Surely the huge stainless steel vessel should not sit out in a field while the integrity of the base pad concrete is determined and, if necessary, the concrete is replaced or repaired.

Accordingly, we request that you issue an immediate order directing that copies of the nonconformance report improperly withheld by Kansas Gas and Electric Company be delivered to MACEA and placed in the public document room, and directing that the reactor pressure vessel be stored at its place of manufacture until the question of the safety problem is resolved.

Very truly yours,

William H. Ward Attorney for MACEA

WHW: bw

enclosures as stated

cc: Stephen H. Lewis, OELD, USNRC

Jay E. Silberg, Esq. William H. Griffin, Esq.