

STATEMENT TO ZIMMER PROJECT PERSONNEL

BY

JAMES G. KEPPLER, NRC REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR  
June 29, 1982

Ladies and Gentlemen --

I have asked for this opportunity to speak to you today, because I want you to understand the important role you have to fill here at the Zimmer Station. I am sure you all realize the high level of attention that the Zimmer project has been receiving -- from the Congress, from the NRC's Commissioners, from the public and from the news media. Construction at Zimmer has become one of the focal points of the national interest in nuclear power plants.

The construction of a quality plant demands teamwork on the part of all employees. We do recognize, however, that at any construction site there is bound to be some friction between those performing the construction work and those doing quality inspections. We are not so naive as to think that such friction can be totally eliminated. We do feel strongly, however, that friction becomes unacceptable intimidation if it results in quality control inspectors not doing their job for fear of some sort of reprisal.

I want you to know that I expect the construction of this plant to be carried out without any further instances of intimidation or harassment. We cannot, we will not, tolerate such incidents as have occurred here at Zimmer in the past. The construction of this plant is too important to be influenced by harassment.

You are also no doubt aware of the findings of the NRC investigation last year, and the quality control problems that the site QA/QC staff has had to overcome. Because of past inadequacies, there is much work to be done to determine the quality of construction here.

When our investigation began to find evidence of quality assurance and documentation problems in early 1981, we seriously considered stopping all ongoing construction work. In fact, there were those on my staff who urged me to do just that. However, I didn't think that stopping all work was the best solution -- and instead, we directed the reorganizing of the Quality Assurance Program and the system of 100 per cent reinspection by Cincinnati Gas & Electric personnel of all subsequent contractor inspections.

These and other required actions resolved our immediate concerns for the ongoing work, subject to continuing NRC inspections.

For the construction work already completed, we found all too many instances where the quality of the work was in question or was not properly documented. The licensee could not prove to our satisfaction that much of the work met the required specifications, codes and standards.

For this reason we have required the utility to develop a quality confirmation program to recheck those areas of construction where the quality of work was in question because of the earlier lapses in the quality assurance system.

As many of you may know, there have been problems found in these areas -- and in some cases rework has already started. Other instances of rework may be identified as the quality confirmation program continues.

Now, I want to ask for the help of all Zimmer project personnel. The help I am seeking is for any of you who have concerns about construction activities - and cannot resolve those concerns through supervisory channels - please bring these to our attention.

Despite all the attention that quality assurance and intimidation problems have received, we continue to hear rumors that harassment incidents are continuing and that the individuals involved are reluctant to come forward with information about the incidents because they fear some sort of reprisal. We intend to pursue fully any suggestion of harassment. NRC personnel will be selecting, at random, a number of quality assurance personnel for informal interviews. We hope they will be candid and open with us. At this point, we are not asking for formal statements but rather we want to determine if there is a harassment problem and how extensive it might be.

NRC inspectors cannot be everywhere and see everything, nor should that be our job. Successful construction of this plant requires the entire construction and quality assurance system to do its job. And each of you has a part in that system.

We at the NRC will not tolerate instances of intimidation or harassment. I can assure you that we will deal with such incidents to the maximum extent of the law and NRC regulations, including referral of the matters to the Department of Justice for possible investigation and prosecution. It should be clear to you that I endorse the importance of the quality assurance function. However, you should also realize that I also expect all employees to responsibly carry out their jobs in the construction of a quality nuclear plant.

NRC Telephone Numbers: 513/553-2052 (Resident Inspector's Office)  
312/932-2500 (Regional Office - Collect calls accepted)

ZIMMER QUESTIONNAIRE

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

INTERVIEWED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

INSPECTOR NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

INSPECTOR ACCOMPANIED BY \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER: \_\_\_\_\_

DISCIPLINE: \_\_\_\_\_

NO      YES

1. Have you been harassed as a result of your QC duties?      \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you been intimidated as a result of your QC duties?      \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you know of any other inspector who may have been harassed or intimidated?      \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Has anyone, either craft personnel or your own management, ever suggested that you accept a nonconforming item or procedure?      \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- |   | <u>NO</u> | <u>YES</u> |
|---|-----------|------------|
| 5. Have you ever accepted any plant items you considered unacceptable by the applicable Code or Standard? | _____     | _____      |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| 6. Do you know of any inspector who may have accepted unacceptable items or procedures?                   | _____     | _____      |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| 7. Have nonconforming items you have identified been documented and entered into a nonconformance system? | _____     | _____      |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| 8. Are you aware of any undocumented deficiencies in the plant?   | _____     | _____      |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| 9. Do you feel that you have received adequate management support?  | _____     | _____      |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |
| _____   |           |            |

NO      YES

10. Has anyone directed or suggested that you not contact the NRC if you had a concern?

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11. Do you wish to be contacted off-site?

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