UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES UCLA

BERKELEY · DAVIS · IRVINE · LOS ANGELES · RIVERSIDE · SAN DIEGO · SAN FRANCISCO SANTA BARBARA · SANTA CRUZ

COMMUNITY SAFETY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF RESEARCH & OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90024

13 February 1984

Director
Division of Operating Reactors
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Docket: 50-142

Dear Sir:

During the annual reactor calibrations, it was found that two of the control blades exhibited prolonged drop times, one approaching the acceptability limit and one slightly exceeding the limit.

A preliminary investigation has revealed that the problem resides within the core and not in the external drive trains. Manual torquing of the shafts suggests a thickening of the lubricant in the rod support bearings. There is no indication of roughness or points of hangup, but rather a steady viscous drag. It is well known that lubricants deteriorate in radiation fields. This kind of rod behavior has been observed previously at UCLA and was expected to recur although the life of the lubricant and hence the timing of the phenomenon was unknown.

This report is filed in compliance with our Technical Specification VIII.M.2.e. All reactor operations have been suspended pending correction of the problem.

Sincerely,

Walter F. Wegst

Walter F. Wegst, Director
Office of Research &
Occupational Safety

WFW/NCO/jb

A020
1/0