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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

May 24, 1984

The Honorable Nunzio J. Palladino
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I urge the Commission not to decide whether to grant the application from Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) for an operating license for Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 1, until the Commission staff has thoroughly investigated, and the Commission reviewed, the hundreds of allegations that have been made to the NRC that design and construction quality assurance breakdowns make it impossible to determine that the operation of the plant would be protective of the health and safety of the public.

Substantial questions about the Diablo Canyon plant have been raised by approximately sixty employees of PG&E contractors who have reported hundreds of alleged violations of safety requirements to NRC staff. Despite initial reports from the NRC Office of Inspections (OI) that violations have been substantiated in "all areas" of quality assurance, these allegations and reports have not yet been fully examined by the Commission. Only six of the sixty employees who made such reports have been interviewed so far by OI, and the NRC staff reportedly has proposed to submit hundreds of documented allegations to PG&E for response without first conducting an independent evaluation. Further, in at least six cases PG&E or its contractors has fired whistleblowers; in the two cases appealed to the Department of Labor the firings were found to be reprisals for the reports to the NRC. Since then, other whistleblowers have been transferred to other jobs. These actions have raised separate questions, in addition to those of design and construction quality assurance, about the management integrity and competence of PG&E.

Despite the serious questions which have been raised about Diablo Canyon, the Commission in April issued a low-power license for the plant, and there are reports that the Commission may make a decision as early as July on whether to issue the operating license that would allow full-power commercial operation of the plant.

5/30..To OGC to Prepare Response for Signature of Chairman and
Comm Review...Date due: June 8..Cpys to: RF, OCA to Ack, EDO
84-0564

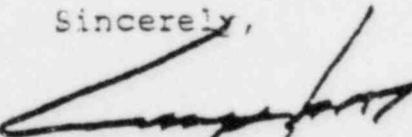
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It would be a serious mistake for the NRC to move so rapidly on the Diablo Canyon license that proper reviews cannot be conducted to resolve the many questions which have been raised about the safety of the plant, especially given its proximity to a seismic fault. I urge the Commission to take the time to investigate all questions thoroughly, to assure that the health and safety of the public will be protected before an operating license is issued.

Thank you for your attention to my request. I look forward to your early response.

Sincerely,



Gary Hart
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Nuclear Regulation