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DOCKETED
USNRC

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Docket No. 50-160-REN EXHIBIT NO. 17
 In the matter of Rebecca Long
☐ Staff ☐ Applicant ☒ Intervenor ☐ Other
☒ Identified ☐ Received ☒ Rejected Reporter WLL
 Date 5/21/96 Witness KL

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C4 Monday, December 27, 1993 *****

Inspector: NRC bias put public in danger

Atlanta woman cites
report on Tech reactor

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Nuclear Regulatory Commission inspector in Atlanta who has sued the agency for sex discrimination and harassment says her work was compromised at potential risk to the public and nuclear industry workers.

Rebecca Long, 40, said male managers in the Atlanta regional office undermined some of her safety related findings out of spite.

She said the handling of her safety report on a nuclear reactor at Georgia Tech was an example of what she considers questionable NRC conduct.

"I'm not anti-NRC," she told the Houston Chronicle in Sunday's editions. "Some of the finest people I've ever worked with are here, and they do a hell of a job. It's just that there are pockets of problems that need to be cleaned out."

Long works in the NRC's Region II office in Atlanta, which oversees 33 nuclear reactors in 10 Southeastern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

She said four men in the office have tampered with her work, badgered her with derogatory comments and improperly denied her promotions and bonuses since 1987.

Although Long's allegations involve one of the agency's five regional offices, reports have previously indicated a growing mistrust of the NRC among whistleblowers at nuclear power plants.

Long said some NRC managers delete or "water down" serious safety problems documented by inspectors. She added that it is an agency dominated by "good old boys" who reward "team players."

The NRC hired Long in February 1986 at an entry-level salary, earning about \$20,000 less than male inspectors with comparable backgrounds. She holds a master's degree in nuclear engineering.

She said her trouble began after she complained about her pay to Region II managers. Named in her lawsuit are managers Frank Jape, Ken Barr and Bruce Wilson. Another manager, Bill Little, was the subject of a grievance Long filed with her union.

Jape, Barr and Little still work in the Region II office. Wilson left the NRC last year.

Little, reached at his home by the Chronicle last week, said "I don't know of any retaliation" against Long. Jape declined comment. Neither Barr nor Wilson returned telephone calls.

The Georgia Tech incident, which resulted in a worker's radiation exposure, was one of several examples Long offered of what she considers questionable NRC conduct.

In 1987, she inspected a research reactor operated by Georgia Tech. Based on her inspection, the NRC cited the university for several violations, including failure to properly control experiments.

A few months later, she said, Jape retracted the citations without her knowledge, contrary to NRC procedures.

Georgia Tech continued operating the reactor until January 1988, when the NRC ordered it to cease all experiments because of a "breakdown in management controls" — the same problem Long had previously identified.

"They put something in [the reactor] that got much more radiation than they thought it would and the sample exploded," contaminating a worker, Long said.

Long's discrimination and harassment allegations against Jape were rejected in 1990 by a federal magistrate.

But a federal judge who reviewed the ruling decided to retry the case, which now includes additional allegations.

NRC Chairman Ivan Selin refused to comment on the lawsuit. In the past he has vowed to protect nuclear industry whistleblowers and weed out harassment and discrimination within the agency.

Atlanta
Journal/
Constitution

12/27/93

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