

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

December 16, 1971

To: Congressional Liaison
Atomic Energy Commission
Washington, D.C.

Enclosure from: Mr. Paul H. Engstrom, President
MECCA
Central Manor
26 East Exchange
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Re: Monticello Plant in Minnesota.

I forward the attached for your consideration.

Your report in duplicate along with the return of the enclosure will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Hubert H. Humphrey

Hubert H. Humphrey

Please address envelope only to the attention of: David Gartner

Copy sent PDR

Rec'd Off. Dir. of Reg.
Date 12/22/71
Time 4:30

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MECCA

MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
CENTRAL MANOR • 26 East Exchange • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101 • Phone: (612) 222-2998

Copy
December 7, 1971

The Honorable Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
State of Minnesota
Senate of the United States
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Humphrey:

First let me thank you for your kind responses to our earlier communications on various aspects of the environmental crisis. You convey a sincere concern for a growing national problem that threatens the health and safety of our people.

As you know, the Atomic Energy Commission has been galloping along at an unprecedented pace, developing and promoting nuclear power all over the place. We are not against nuclear power or any other form of energy production when it is free of contamination and danger.

Such is not the case with the Monticello Plant. MECCA's scientists and others, including Gofman, Tamplin, and Stern-glass have trumpeted loud and clear the conclusions that the Monticello Plant is emitting radioactive waste, that this waste is dangerous, and that the chances of increased emission are substantial.

Therefore, we are joining with other groups and calling for closure of the Monticello Plant. We have not rushed to this judgment. We have carefully studied all aspects of the situation and have arrived at this position reluctantly. We ask for your support.

Sincerely



Paul H. Engstrom,
President

enclosure
PE:lk

MECCA

MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL MANOR, 26 E WICH. ST., ST. PAUL, MINN. 55101, 222-2998

NEWS
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 24, 1971

For three years MECCA has been actively engaged in opposition to the addition of any radioisotopes to our environment. This opposition is based on universal scientific agreement that there is no safe level of radiation exposure below which damage to public health and safety cannot occur. Our most recent effort in this regard has been the campaign for a moratorium on the construction of new nuclear power plants in Minnesota.

In those instances where the power company has introduced hazardous substances to our environment we have called for adequate and responsible measure to safeguard the public health and safety so as to ensure the enjoyment of a clean, safe environment by all Minnesotans.

Despite the commendable and responsible efforts of the State's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Warren R. Lawson, the events of this past weekend demonstrate that at present no adequate procedures have been developed to coordinate activities in the event of an emergency connected with the operation of the Monticello Plant.

We are today calling for an immediate shutdown of operations at Monticello. This action is being taken at three levels: The Atomic Energy Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Governor's Office in the State of Minnesota.

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Immediate action by the AEC to close down Monticello is justified because of the Plant's failure to operate within AEC requirements. First, no workable emergency plan exists for the Monticello plant. Secondly, Northern States Power Company has failed on two occasions to cooperate with responsible state authorities by delaying the reporting of information concerning unusual occurrences at Monticello. Thirdly, there is a serious question as to whether the release this past weekend meets the AEC requirement contained in the license for Monticello that "the licensee...exert his best efforts to keep levels of radioactive materials in effluents as low as practicable." Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the accident which occurred at Monticello on July 14, 1971, violated the AEC standards for liquid effluents by a factor of at least twenty-five.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Immediate action by EPA to close down Monticello is necessary for two reasons. First, there has been to date no definition of the area in which Minnesota thermal standards apply to liquid effluents discharged by the Monticello plant into the River. In such a situation no thermal standards can be said to be in operation and therefore EPA requirements are not being met. Second, in the wake of Calvert Cliff's vs. AEC decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals (District of Columbia Circuit), the AEC Licensing Proceeding for Monticello held last year -- similar to that being held at Calvert Cliff -- was conducted in a manner which in the court's words involved a "crabbed interpretation (by AEC) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (which) makes a mockery of the Act." The failure of the AEC to take into consideration matters of concern to the environment and public health and safety at the 1970 Monticello hearings requires that the EPA take action to close the Plant until such review, presently underway, is completed.

GOVERNOR WENDELL R. ANDERSON

Our Governor has endorsed the MECCA proposal for a Nuclear Moratorium. In his inaugural address he made a responsible appeal for swift action to deal with environmental problems. He eloquently stated that if we err on matters of environmental protection we should make certain that we err on the side of public health and safety. In no area is this more true than in the area of radiation control. We are asking our Governor to close down the Monticello plant because it represents a threat to public health and safety three ways: (1) the threat to public health and safety posed by the continuing emissions of low levels of radioisotopes from the Plant in its day to day operations, (2) lack of a workable plan to deal with emergency situations at Monticello, (3) no adequate protection to the Mississippi under thermal standards.

A. THREAT TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY FROM LOW LEVEL EMISSIONS

For sometime a controversy has raged in the scientific community concerning the effects of low level radiation -- even that below AEC and MPCA standards -- on human beings. Dr. Alice Stewart demonstrated as early as 1958 at Oxford University that low level radiation could produce serious effects in humans. Her work indicated that mothers who had received a series of three to five pelvic x-rays during pregnancy had children who were almost twice as likely to develop leukemia and other cancers before age ten. Important new data collected and studied by the eminent statistician at Carnegie-Mellon University, Morris H. DeGroot suggests a positive correlation between infant mortality and radioactive emissions from three of the four nuclear reactors studied. Dr. DeGroot concludes his study by calling for a large-scale statistical study to shed additional light on this serious matter.

Minnesota has in the past suffered the indignity of receiving more than its fair share of radioactive fallout from nuclear weapons testing. The citizens of Minneapolis-St. Paul have suffered the indignity of having radioactive waste dumped into their drinking water supply on several occasions during the operation of the ill-fated Elk River Nuclear Plant. This past weekend Minneapolis suffered the indignity of having radioactive waste dumped indiscriminately into its drinking water supply. Even more serious than the radioactivity released into our drinking water are the radioactive gas emissions presently being released into the air at Monticello on a day to day basis.

Despite the foregoing, no definitive study has been done in Minnesota to determine the relation between low level radiation exposure and its effect on humans. To have proceeded with the development of nuclear power in this State without this vital information is a tragedy that may be borne by future generations of Minnesotans. At a minimum it represents decision-making without complete information which all Minnesotans surely decry.

It is imperative, therefore, that Governor Anderson commission a study in the State to determine the relation between low-level radiation and its effects on humans. Further, it is imperative that until the results of such study are made known and have been fully discussed by the public -- which to date has been left out of nuclear power decisions -- that Monticello be closed down as a potential public nuisance under Minnesota law. Public nuisances have traditionally and exclusively been within the power of State government control. We ask that Governor Anderson take immediate action to abate the potential public nuisance from low-level radiation presently posed by the Monticello plant.

B. LACK OF WORKABLE EMERGENCY PLAN

The AEC has delegated to the State of Minnesota the responsibility for protection of the public health and safety in the event of an emergency at Monticello. This delegation has been made without granting the State the authority necessary to carry out this responsibility. At the present time Northern States Power Company has refused to cooperate with appropriate State agencies by delaying the reporting of pertinent information to these agencies and by denying the jurisdiction of the State on these matters. The most recent statement on this matter was made public by Mr. Roland W. Comstock, Director for Environmental Affairs of NSP when he said on November 23, 1971, that the Company was not legally required to inform State agencies that it intended to dump radioactive water in the Mississippi over this weekend.

This present unworkable state of affairs justifies immediate action on the part of the Governor to seek an injunction to close down Monticello.

C. THREAT TO MISSISSIPPI FROM THERMAL EFFLUENT

The danger of discharging heated water into lakes and streams has been the subject of concern and governmental regulation for sometime. Standards for the thermal discharge of the Monticello Plant have yet to be defined, a full eighteen months after the MPCA first granted authority for thermal discharge from the Plant. Three state permits are involved. The Water Appropriation Permit issued by the Department of Natural Resources, The Waste Discharge Permit issued by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Waste Storage Permit issued by the MPCA.

In the absence of proper protection of the River from pollution of any sort connected with operations of the Monticello plant, we ask that all three permits be revoked. Such revocation is permitted under the terms of the permit in the event that the State deems it necessary for protection of the public health and safety. We call on Governor Anderson to initiate action to revoke all state permits pertaining to Monticello until the many questions we have raised here today are adequately discussed and resolved.

MECCA ACTION

(1) In addition to making the above requests, MECCA is preparing a formal objection to the determination by the AEC announcement yesterday that they would not recommend closing of Monticello pending the environmental review required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

(2) Launch a statewide appeal to the citizens of Minnesota for financial support for whatever legal action may be necessary to carry out closing of the Monticello plant in the event that our public officials fail to act as requested. This financial assistance will support the current legal work presently undertaken by MECCA in this effort.

(3) Request immediate availability of free television and radio time to MECCA and other citizens groups to properly inform the public on this urgent matter and to counter the misleading advertising campaign sponsored by NSP to lull the public into complacency with respect to Nuclear Generating Plants.

FOR INFORMATION WRITE:

Howard Vogel, Chairman, Legal Committee
Russell Hatling, Director, Public Information