

50-263

AUG 6 1970

WNC
PDR
Commissioner Ramey
Commissioner Thompson
Commissioner Larson

PROPOSED REPLY TO MR. ROBERT P. CLASS

Enclosed is a copy of a proposed reply to Mr. Robert P. Class, Commander, St. Anthony Park Post No. 34, The American Legion, St. Paul, Minnesota, which we discussed at the last meeting of the Commissioners' Environmental Group. The letter has been revised in accordance with the changes suggested at that time, and I would appreciate it if you would let me know if you have any further corrections. I will call your office early next week.

Signed CLH

C. L. Henderson
Assistant Director of Regulation
for Administration

Enclosure:
Proposed ltr to Mr. Class

cc: Chairman Seaborg (2)
Commissioner Johnson

bcc: CLHenderson
JMFelton
DR Reading
Gertter (DR-2687)

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PDR ADOCK 05000263
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OFFICE ▶	DR	ADIR:ADM:DR				ACRS
SURNAME ▶	JMFelton:jdw	CLHenderson				
DATE ▶	8/6/70	8/6/70				



UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

Mr. Robert F. Class, Commander
St. Anthony Park Post No. 34
The American Legion
2029 Juliet Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55105

Dear Mr. Class:

I am pleased to reply to your letter to Chairman Seaborg dated June 25, 1970, in which you enclosed a resolution concerning the preservation of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area air and water resources.

Each application to construct and to operate a nuclear power plant is subjected to the extensive licensing process described in the enclosed booklet, "Licensing of Power Reactors." This includes a thorough review by the AEC's regulatory staff and by the independent Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. After reviewing the application of the Northern States Power Company for the Monticello plant, the regulatory staff and the ACRS have concluded that there is reasonable assurance that the plant can be operated without undue risk to the health and safety of the public.

I am enclosing a copy of the regulatory staff's public safety evaluation of the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant, prepared prior to the public hearing on the facility's operating license application, which contains a number of consultant reports including the report of the ACRS. The evaluation addresses all of the points that were raised in the resolution you sent except that relating to the authority of the State of Minnesota, through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, to set radioactive discharge limits more restrictive than the standards set by the AEC. This matter is presently the subject of litigation between the Northern States Power Company and the State. You will note that section 3.7 of the report (pages 32-42) describes our evaluation of the liquid and gaseous radioactive waste system and our conclusions, and sections 4 and 5 (pages 43-50) analyze the radiological consequences from a design basis accident and discuss emergency planning. As the report indicates, the protection of the St. Paul and Minneapolis water systems, even in the unlikely event of an accident at the plant, was considered in our safety evaluation.

Public hearings before an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board to consider Northern States' application for an operating license for the Monticello plant were held April, May, June and August 1970. After the public hearings are concluded, the Board will issue an initial decision based on the evidence presented at the hearing. The AEC will authorize operation

of the facility only upon a favorable decision in this proceeding and in accordance with any limitations found necessary or appropriate. If the plant is licensed to operate, it will be subject to AEC inspection and surveillance throughout its lifetime.

With respect to the radioactive effluents released by nuclear power plants, I am enclosing a print of Part 1 of the hearings on the environmental effects of producing electric power held by the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy in late 1969 and early 1970. I would call your attention especially to testimony by Commissioner Theos J. Thompson (pages 175-194), Commissioner Clarence E. Larson (pages 238-276), and Dr. Paul Tompkins, Executive Director of the Federal Radiation Council (pages 391-415). This testimony discusses in detail sources of radioactive effluents from a nuclear power plant and how these effluents are processed, the bases for radiation protection standards, how these standards are applied as limits on normal releases of small quantities of radioactive material, the results of environmental monitoring programs around nuclear power plants, and environmental research programs on the effects of radiation that are carried out by the AEC.

In summary, operating experience has shown that actual releases of radioactivity from these plants have generally been small percentages of limits imposed under AEC regulations. Based on our present knowledge and operating experience, we do not believe that the low levels of radioactivity released from nuclear power reactors will have a perceptible adverse effect on the environment or on public health and safety.

For your information, I also am enclosing copies of speeches made by Commissioners Larson, Ramey, and Thompson during the past year concerning the licensing and regulation of nuclear power plants. These remarks discuss the AEC's concern for public health and safety in its regulatory activities, and describe some of the studies and the experience that confirm our confidence in the safety of nuclear power plants licensed by the AEC.

Sincerely,

Harold L. Price
Director of Regulation

Enclosures:

1. Licensing of Power Reactors
2. Safety Evaluation of Monticello
Nuclear Generating Plant
3. Part 1
4. Speeches