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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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APR 26 1959

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg
 Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission
 Washington, D. C. 20545

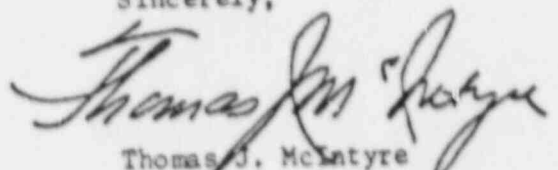
Dear Dr. Seaborg:

One of my constituents, Miss Susan Fowler of North Hampton, New Hampshire, has sent me the attached copy of a letter of hers which recently appeared in the Portsmouth Herald. In this letter to the Herald she has set forth some concerns she has regarding the possible construction of a nuclear power plant in the area of Seabrook, New Hampshire.

I am wondering, Dr. Seaborg, if you could have someone prepare some comments on the question Miss Fowler raises in her letter? I want to be better informed on this subject.

My thanks to you.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. McIntyre
 United States Senator

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Public Forum

Concern Over Atomic Power Plant

To the Editor:

This letter was originally written to Atty. Gen. George Pappas-Clanis.

I am very much concerned over the proposition of a nuclear power plant in Seabrook, N.H. and surrounding towns. I am well aware of the advantages that such a plant would bring in terms of taxes, jobs, and electric power. However, I feel such advantages are well outweighed by the possible disadvantages in going ahead too quickly without thoroughly investigating the environmental effects of such a plant.

A recent issue of "Scientific American," March 1969, states: "An ecological system in dy-

namic balance is like a finely tuned automobile engine, and damage to any component can disturb or impair the efficiency of the entire mechanism." p. 22.

This quotation is from the article "Thermal Pollution and Aquatic Life." I am worried about the components of food chains which may be affected by this 30 F. change or rise in temperature. Do we really know what ultimate effects this will have on the fish and lobsters of our area? I believe that the reproductive stage of aquatic animals is particularly sensitive to temperature. Might this not also affect the clams? I use Seabrook's clam flats and

I am proud that New Hampshire has one of the best clam flats on the east coast. I would hate to see such a valuable resource thrown away.

Has the possibility of the warm water circulating back into the harbor because of the suction at the intake point been considered? 500,000 gallons of water a minute is an extremely large amount. How would this affect the larval stages of the clams? Would they be sucked up and killed? Many people in Seabrook depend on this clam flat for food and for a living.

Another effect of warm water is increase in algal growth which uses up oxygen in the water. Also the "Scientific American" article cited above noted that:

"In estuaries algae proliferating in the warm water can clog the filtering apparatus of shellfish and cause their death." p. 23.

Might not stirring up silt in such a great amount of suction also clog the filter feeding mechanisms of the clams?

I wonder, too, how much duck hunting they will allow around such an area. It would seem that all it would take would be one person shooting at the plant by accident to stop hunting in the area. While I was in graduate school at UNH I spent the spring semester of 1967 observing birds twice a week in the Hampton and Hampton Falls salt marsh and saw over 40 species of birds using the marsh. I found it to be an important feeding and resting area for waterfowl and shorebirds. It would be a shame to upset the ecology of the area to the point where it could no longer serve this purpose.

I realize that Seabrook needs industry but does it need industry this badly? If there are no detrimental effects to the environment, such a plant would be a good idea. I hope that the matter will be investigated much more thoroughly before we move ahead.

SUSAN FOWLER
North Hampton