

LeRoy Reid

1 U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

2

3 In the Matter of:)

4) License No: SUB 1010
SEQUOYAH FUELS CORPORATION)

5

Monday

6

January 6, 1986

7

Kerr-McGee Ranch House
Gore, Oklahoma

8

9 The above-entitled matter came on for hearing,
pursuant to notice, at 1:25 p.m.

10

APPEARANCES:

11

On behalf of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission:

12

DALE SMITH

13

Director

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U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

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CHARLES A. CAIN

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4-86-005

EXHIBIT 19

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Acme Reporting Company

12021 628-4888

I N D E X

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WITNESS:

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Leroy Reid

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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2 MR. SMITH: My name is Dale Smith. This
3 is Chuck Cain.

4 We are conducting an investigation. NRC's
5 procedures require us to kind of formalize these things.

6 MR. REID: I realize that is your job, and
7 I am proud you are here.

8 MR. SMITH: I wanted you to understand why
9 we have got the recorder here to give us a written transcript
10 that we can go back and refer to later on and not have to
11 rely on our faulty memories and all of that.

12 We are trying to get as good an understanding
13 as we can as to what happened and what implications there
14 are for this happening again. We want to make sure that it
15 doesn't happen again.

16 Perhaps if we understand what all went on
17 and how we got where we are at we will know what not to do
18 next time.

19 That is a big part of what we are here for.
20 Our NRC group is kind of divided into the two functions
21 looking into the investigation angle of it. The group that
22 is still over there at the plant trying to stay out of
23 people's way and be involved in the plant cleanup and the
24 environmental monitoring and things like that.

25 Some of the things that come out here may

1 be of some use to them, but our primary purpose is to look
2 into the conditions and situations that led up to the
3 accident and what we can learn out of it.

4 For the record why don't you state your
5 full name and what your position at Sequoyah is?

6 MR. REID: I am Leroy Reid. I am a Supervisor
7 on B shift.

8 MR. SMITH: Which is the B shift?

9 MR. REID: We change around all the time.

10 MR. SMITH: On Saturday?

11 MR. REID: On Saturday I was on the 12:00
12 until 8:00.

13 MR. SMITH: What I am --

14 MR. REID: Can I help you by just giving
15 you a brief rundown of my experience with this cylinder?

16 MR. SMITH: Sure, why don't you just start
17 and tell us whatever you want to tell us about.

18 MR. REID: I have some notes that I took down
19 to make sure my memory has stayed right. Is that all right?

20 MR. SMITH: That is good.

21 MR. REID: Let me get my glasses out. My
22 handwriting matches my eyes.

23 On Saturday morning, which was January 4th,
24 this Ed Lowe cylinder number 2047 -- That number you gave
25 a while ago that was right. It was sitting in the south

1 UF₆ drain station. When they are sitting there of course
2 we have operators to check these and handle that part.

3 Of course I walked by to look but not in
4 detail, you know, because we have an operator to take care
5 of that stuff.

6 When we started -- Now I found this out
7 through my operator Pat Sanders. I think you have interviewed
8 him.

9 Pat told me when he got there the weight on
10 the scale part showed 23,400 and something, about 430 or so.
11 Now he started draining about 2:15 in the morning. I have
12 already told you that.

13 This isn't anything unusual. Of course you
14 already know we have two drain stations, one to the north
15 and one to the south.

16 Quite often that UF₆ will freeze out a line
17 or a line will be a little too cold or something and you get
18 a plug, a restriction on the line.

19 Pat started draining, and he thought that his
20 filters or a line had blown off so he finished draining in
21 the north UF₆ draining station through that side.

22 Then lots of times when we have this restriction
23 we just simply open up a drain line on the empty cylinder
24 that had lots of vacuum on it. This evacuates it.

25 Am I going into too much detail?

1 MR. SMITH: No, of course not. That is fine.

2 MR. REID: Okay.

3 This evacuates it back out. Then maybe you
4 can drain and no more problems.

5 Pat did the right thing.

6 He did that; but then when he got another
7 cold trap ready to drain he thought, "Well, I will see if
8 it will go this time."

9 So he tried to drain it. He said he got
10 very little out of it this time. He did get a little.
11 Then something come to him that it was unusual to plug
12 off twice in a row like that. That was around 26,400
13 pounds give or take a few pounds.

14 Pat got down and looked around and he found
15 the cart -- You know, the UF₆ sits in a cradle and sits
16 on a cart that we pull up on the -- a scale cart.

17 The back wheels they would be on the east
18 end, the rear wheels on it, were not all the way up on
19 the scales. Now this had been sitting there from when this
20 Harrison boy, the deceased -- I did the investigation before
21 anything ever happened today.

22 I checked back and apparently he had put it
23 on the scales. This Harrison had. Then it went through
24 the next shift. They had drained in it.

25 This is just my own thing. I couldn't prove

1 it to you, but I feel personally like the cylinder was
2 over full before we even started trying to drain into it.
3 Then we added to the problem.

4 The next shift, which was the 4:00 to 12:00
5 shift, drained into it. We came along, and we drained
6 into it like I say at 26,400 pounds.

7 When Pat told me about this and I got down
8 there he asked me what to do with it. He knew it was
9 over filled. I told him to evacuate it just as quick as
10 he could up to an empty cold trap, the one that had the
11 most vacuum, because we had to get it out of there quickly.
12 I knew that the cylinder had to be pretty well full from
13 what he had told me.

14 I got down there. I went down right behind
15 him. I don't even remember the reason why. I was just a
16 little bit behind him. He had unhooked -- He had decided
17 to try to get it on the scales correctly so he could tell
18 how much he was evacuating back out which wasn't a bad
19 idea as far as getting it on the scales.

20 I stopped him. I talked to him. The cart
21 wouldn't pull itself out either. It was just over the hump
22 enough it wouldn't pull out.

23 I said, "No, Pat. Hook it back up like I
24 told you and evacuate it out. We are going to have to get
25 all we can out of that cylinder."

1 We immediately hooked it up. That was roughly
2 6:15 in the morning.

3 So we evacuated it. I told Pat to stand
4 by. There was a lady there. Sue Smith was standing there
5 with him. I was instructing him to stand by and watch this
6 and make for sure that we kept a vacuum on this cylinder
7 at all times.

8 If one of the off-line traps got down to
9 where we didn't have the vacuum, I felt like we needed to
10 switch, to go to another one. If necessary, we would
11 shut down the plant and find something with a vacuum on it.
12 We didn't have this problem though.

13 After I left, Pat decided -- He never lost
14 a vacuum. It got a little weak on the trap that we were
15 evacuating to so he started two more traps with it. He
16 used the secondary cold trap which run colder, and when
17 you cool them off it goes to deeper vacuum. I think he
18 went to one that had like 25 inches of vacuum on it.

19 Now I didn't know this the morning when
20 I left that he had gone to the secondary because I had
21 instructed him what to do, to go to an empty one with a
22 vacuum. He is a good operator so I am going to take him
23 on his word.

24 He told me later about he had switched to
25 that. That was even after the explosion or the ruptured

1 cylinder.

2 He told me when he left he was evacuating it
3 to three traps trying to get all he could out of it so that
4 meant that we evacuated that roughly an hour and 45 minutes
5 before we left. I mean before we made relief which would have
6 been 0800.

7 Is there any questions on anything I have
8 said so far?

9 MR. SMITH: Yeah, a couple.

10 One I guess was you say that the cylinder
11 was loaded on the scale empty during the previous days
12 shift? You said Harrison put it on, right?

13 MR. REID: Uh-huh.

14 MR. SMITH: I assume he was on the day
15 shift, and it was on 24 hours earlier more or less?

16 MR. REID: I don't know what time during
17 that day he put it on.

18 MR. SMITH: But it was at least two shifts
19 back?

20 MR. REID: It was set on during his shift,
21 and I don't know what time.

22 MR. SMITH: How quickly during this normal
23 filling operation and with the temperature whatever it was
24 in the room how quickly do these tanks cool down to where
25 the liquid would turn to a solid?

1 MR. REID: Well, to a complete solid --
2 Our procedures call for, before we get them ready to ship,
3 is a minimum of five days.

4 I presume as far as completely freezing out --
5 and this varies with -- Like in the hot summer time a lot
6 of them even after that length of time will have pressure
7 on them. During the winter time they might cool down to
8 a vacuum in two days.

9 As far as freezing out solid I don't think
10 that cylinder had sat there long enough to freeze out.

11 MR. SMITH: I don't know how this behaves,
12 but would it partially solidify? In other words --

13 MR. REID: It will get mushy.

14 MR. SMITH: But I am trying to visualize
15 if you are loading in this thing over a 24 hour period,
16 would the first stuff you put in start chilling down and
17 solidifying where you have solids on the bottom and liquid
18 on top?

19 MR. REID: I assume. That is what I have
20 always had in my mind. Now this was drained in. Like
21 this boy that put it in, Harrison, they had drained some
22 into it. The next shift had drained some into it. Then
23 we came along and put some more in it.

24 We were shooting for 26,500 is what we were
25 wanting in the cylinder. We had a memo on it that they

1 wanted a minimum of that to fill our order. We would come
2 up short if we didn't have that much in it.

3 MR. SMITH: Now the weights that you gave
4 us, the 23,430 and the 26,400, that is what the scale
5 indicated to you even though the cart wasn't properly
6 positioned?

7 MR. REID: This was before we ever moved
8 the cart any at all.

9 MR. SMITH: So you saw a 3,000 pound weight
10 gain between the first time you tried to fill it and the
11 second time?

12 MR. REID: Yes.

13 The first time I didn't see it. I had to
14 take his word for it. I feel like he give me good
15 information.

16 The last time he had already tried to move
17 it. I had to take his word on that.

18 Then when he hooked it back up, it practically
19 pegged out and it still wasn't all the way on the cart.

20 I was sitting out there a while ago trying
21 to rack my mind and remember what that scale would go to
22 the maximum. I would just have to look and call you back.
23 I look at it day after day, but we had never put that much
24 into one. It wasn't all the way on there.

25 MR. SMITH: Did you ever get it all the way

1 on the cart?

2 MR. REID: I didn't. I couldn't.

3 MR. SMITH: We are up to the 29,000 mark.

4 Was that with the cart --

5 MR. REID: It wasn't all the way on the scale.

6 You know how the rings go around these
7 cylinders, the UF₆ cylinders?

8 MR. SMITH: Uh-huh.

9 MR. REID: Okay.

10 The ring on the valve end if that isn't
11 against the saddle as close as you can get it from that
12 end, which goes into your filters, it is impossible to
13 get it all the way on the cart without it hitting some
14 piping in the front. That is where the mistake of whoever
15 sat it on the saddle was made, and it was sticking out
16 roughly I would say four inches.

17 That is what Pat was going to do when he had
18 it unhooked and was going to move it. He was going to
19 pick it up and then move the cart to where it would be
20 flush against it and sit it back down so we could get
21 a correct weight on it.

22 I knew. There was no doubt in my mind that
23 we needed to get it evacuated. I felt and I have been
24 trained that way. I knew my procedure, and I took action
25 to get that cylinder --

1 I tell you what I did. I was standing there
2 giving instructions and I opened the valve out of the cylinder
3 with the vacuum line open to start with going up to the
4 cold traps. Then as quick as I seen we were getting through
5 it I was afraid we might get a restriction on our pigtail.

6 Like I say, after we seen that there was no
7 restriction in the line and could evacuate. This was my
8 big concern. I was afraid that we developed a restriction
9 in the line, and I found everything all right so I had them
10 close the valve off because there is a pressure gauge on
11 top of our filtering system on the line upstream where we
12 can read the pressure.

13 I had him to block his evacuation line off
14 so I could get an estimate of how much pressure there was.
15 It didn't shoot up as far as I thought it would. I come
16 up fairly slow to something over 20 pounds is as high as
17 I seen it.

18 That is the highest I seen it.

19 MR. SMITH: Go on.

20 MR. REID: Anyway the highest I seen it
21 was something above 20, 20 to 25 pounds. It seems like
22 it was 22 pounds, right in that neighborhood. That was
23 the highest I seen it with the valve closed going through
24 the evacuation line. Then of course I started the evacuation.

25 I instructed them to stand by and keep a

1 vacuum on it and whatever they do keep it evacuating. We
2 had to get it out of that cylinder.

3 That is about all I can --

4 MR. SMITH: Now 22 psi is that a normal
5 kind of pressure that you would expect to see?

6 MR. REID: Well --

7 MR. SMITH: What did that indicate to you?

8 MR. REID: It indicated to me it wasn't
9 near as much pressure as I thought there would be. I had
10 never had a cylinder this full. To me it relieved me
11 a little because I was expecting a lot more pressure.

12 It might have been because you are going to lose
13 a little because of the restriction of your filters and you
14 piping and everything. You lose a certain amount. I didn't
15 know what to expect. I was expecting lots of pressure.

16 22 pounds is too much pressure for the
17 cylinder itself. Normally I would say 10 pounds once it
18 comes back out of the cylinder, maybe a little higher.

19 MR. SMITH: I want to touch back on something
20 just to make sure there.

21 The final reading that you got of 29,500.

22 MR. REID: I didn't take this reading now.

23 MR. SMITH: That somebody else too.

24 MR. REID: The supervisor behind me.

25 Now I have talked to him since. Now this is

1 hearsay. I just talked to him.

2 This is something I forgot to tell you. When
3 we started to evacuate it, when we did get the evacuation
4 started, Pat moved this counterweight.

5 When we put a empty cylinder on the scale,
6 we zero it out to zero with a counterweight or whatever
7 you want to call it. That way we can tell when we get our
8 correct weight in it.

9 Of course, after we drain it then we take
10 it over to a better set of scales to get an accurate, the
11 real accurate weight. It doesn't vary much, within three
12 pounds. That is where it is kept.

13 When we got hooked back up, Pat marked each
14 side of this counterweight and moved it so we could get it
15 up on our scale so we could tell for sure what we were
16 evacuating out.

17 Now have a got that clear?

18 MR. SMITH: Yes.

19 MR. REID: I instructed Pat to be sure to
20 pass on to his relief exactly where that was at so they
21 could come back and get their correct weight as close as
22 possible.

23 We could hear it going through the lines.
24 We knew definitely we were getting, but we wanted an
25 estimate -- Just to see if it was going. I couldn't tell

1 you how much we evacuated out. I know it was going at a
2 pretty rapid rate.

3 I instructed Pat on that to be sure and
4 pass it on which he said he did, and I told the on-coming
5 supervisor, which was Bill Bradley about it.

6 I have talked to Bill since now, and he told
7 me -- as a matter of fact it was this morning. He was
8 telling about the weight 29,5000.

9 I said, "Bill, did you remember to move the
10 weight to where we had it where it was marked?"

11 He said, "Yes, we seen you marks; and we
12 moved it back. That is the correct weight if the scales
13 were right."

14 He thinks the scales hung up on him. As far
15 as my personal opinion all I know is while I was there it
16 wasn't the scales fault other than it might could have
17 been positioned where the cart could have been pulled on.

18 MR. SMITH: You said that even after you
19 brought it back and tried to hook it up again, you know,
20 after Pat had tried to disconnect it and reposition it
21 and brought it back and hooked it up and tried again; that
22 even at that point the cart wasn't completely on the scales?

23 MR. REID: No, it was over enough but yet
24 the wheels were partially riding on the solid piece of
25 track.

1 MR. SMITH: So even then that is the point
2 at which you got you reading of 29,500?

3 MR. REID: It was over 29,000. I am not
4 going to give you the exact on that because as a matter of
5 fact I think it pegged out or awful close to it right
6 there.

7 MR. SMITH: What I am driving at is that the
8 weight of material in the cylinder very well could have
9 been more, even at that point, than what you read?

10 MR. REID: I would say definitely it was.
11 I wouldn't lie to you at all. I definitely think there
12 was way, way more in there.

13 MR. SMITH: Because either the wheels were
14 still hung up a little bit, and that was taking some of
15 the weight?

16 MR. REID: We were able to gain a little
17 bit going forward to get a little more weight on it, but
18 not all of the way.

19 MR. SMITH: Also from what you said and from
20 what other people have indicated that is right at the full
21 scale reading on that dial indicator?

22 MR. REID: I am sorry I don't remember. I
23 pulled up out there a while ago and thought, "They are going
24 to ask me."

25 MR. SMITH: It is something you look at every

1 day and that is something you never look at.

2 MR. REID: I never look at that level because
3 I never expected to --

4 MR. SMITH: There is plenty of time to
5 confirm that.

6 It is your conclusion that whatever reading
7 you saw, 29,000 plus, may had still been on the short side
8 of what was actually in the cylinder?

9 MR. REID: I will take your "may" off of it
10 and okay what you said. I will say definitely there was.

11 MR. CAIN: You heard material though being
12 evacuated from the cylinder toward the end of the shift?

13 MR. REID: Yes, you could hear it. Like
14 when you open the air line it would go pst.

15 I had gone up stairs. This was when we
16 first started to evacuate. You could hear it.

17 MR. CAIN: Let me make sure I understand
18 this pressure gauge thing again.

19 You say during the final phase of filling
20 the cylinder it was 22 pounds, is that right?

21 MR. REID: I am saying, no.

22 Now when you drain down, when you are first
23 putting it in there, your cold traps have usually when they
24 are draining in the neighborhood of 40 pounds of pressure.
25 Then they are up in the air.

1 Have you looked at it. You know how high they
2 are. I couldn't give you the correct feet.

3 Then you get more pressure because of the
4 drop as low as we are. It isn't anything unusual on those.
5 They will run between 40 and 50. Like I say, I don't watch
6 it day after day. I go around and check, but as far as
7 watching it drain everyday I don't.

8 It will run in the neighborhood of 40 to 50
9 pounds of pressure on this gauge. That is upstream of
10 your filters.

11 The pressure I was talking about is what
12 came back out of the filter. Out of the filter which came
13 from the cylinder, the UF₆ cylinder, after it had been
14 over filled. You are talking about two different pressures.

15 MR. CAIN: This is before the evacuation
16 began?

17 MR. REID: Right after I started the evacuation.
18 See, I just started it enough to make sure I could evacuate.

19 My big concern at the time was -- I knew
20 it wasn't a good situation to be in. I was trying for
21 safety. Then I was wanting a little information.

22 I was actually relieved that the pressure
23 didn't show a lot more than it did. I don't think it ever
24 would have it it hadn't been put in the steam chest. I
25 think it would have been less.

1 Do you want facts or do you want my ideas?

2 MR. SMITH: Your ideas are helpful to us.

3 MR. REID: I would have never put it in the
4 steam chest. I am not criticizing. We have procedures
5 that tell us what to do with over full cylinders. That is
6 what I was doing.

7 MR. CAIN: You probably have already talked
8 to some people on the day shift that followed you.

9 MR. REID: I have talked to the supervisor.

10 MR. CAIN: This is probably not a fair
11 question. I should probably wait and ask him, but just
12 to give me some background here since you have talked to
13 him. What did he do now with the cylinder on day shift?
14 What has he told you that he did with it? Did they continue
15 to evacuate it until they got it down to 27,500 or do you
16 know that information?

17 MR. REID: I couldn't give you a good honest
18 answer. I know that he did evacuate it. I am afraid I
19 will give you some false information if I start.

20 He did evacuate it for a short length of
21 time. Then he talked like he didn't think he was getting
22 anything else out of it for some reason, but I would rather
23 that you --

24 I don't care because I want to tell you the
25 truth, and I want facts.

1 MR. CAIN: Okay.

2 It apparently then went to the steam chest
3 I take it?

4 MR. REID: I don't know what time he put it
5 in the steam chest.

6 I am afraid I will give you some hearsay.

7 MR. CAIN: That is all right.

8 I had a couple of other questions too on --
9 So during your shift you really never got the cart fully
10 on to the scales. There was always a little bit of the
11 wheel pressing against what I guess is the floor?

12 MR. REID: The rail, like a railroad track.

13 MR. CAIN: Okay, the rail.

14 MR. REID: It was impossible for me to do
15 it without moving hot liquid UF₆ around more than I was
16 willing to take the risk of doing.

17 MR. CAIN: Okay.

18 So you really didn't have a accurate weight
19 on the cylinder at the end of the shift?

20 MR. REID: See these carts -- originally
21 see we used 10 ton cylinders. I am sure you are up on this.
22 Then they started bring the larger tons. We have to do it
23 perfectly to get it on there.

24 You have the same situation as far as your
25 cart that carries it except the overhang on your cylinders

1 on the 14 ton cylinders.

2 MR. SMITH: How long have they been using
3 these 14 ton cylinders?

4 MR. REID: I couldn't give you an accurate
5 answer. We had been in operation for a pretty good while
6 before. I am sure they have records.

7 MR. SMITH: It is a fairly recent thing?
8 I mean it is something that has happened since the plant
9 was built? You operated a long time on 10 ton cylinders?

10 MR. REID: I can't give you the exact time.
11 At first we used 10 ton. There are people that could give
12 you the dates.

13 There was a time that we used 10 ton cylinders.
14 Mainly is what it is set up for.

15 As a matter of fact I think it was a few
16 years before we got a 14 ton.

17 MR. SMITH: In looking at the cart that the
18 cylinders go on to get onto the weighing platform, these
19 cards pre-existed the introduction of 14 ton cylinders,
20 is that right?

21 MR. REID: Yes, there is no problem with the
22 cylinder as far as the cart except how close you can get
23 to our drain station because of piping.

24 My opinion -- You know, the cart isn't the
25 problem. What caused this is just the overhang on the longer

1 cylinder. The piping was in the way, and it didn't --

2 MR. SMITH: Let me pursue the same idea but
3 kind of expand it. The whole set up, the cart, the place
4 where you hook up the pigtail, that was all originally
5 designed to accommodate the 10 ton cylinder; and then along
6 comes the 14 and no changes were made.

7 I am speculating and want you to tell me --

8 MR. REID: Originally we didn't have a filter
9 system. This might have been part of the --

10 Then we had trouble with high chromium, and
11 they started trying to filter that out. These were added
12 so there has been a revision from the original. Without
13 those filters there probably would have been no problem.

14 MR. SMITH: I don't know how to ask the
15 question succinctly, but do you think that something
16 should have been done to change the configuration of the
17 whole station to accommodate the bigger cylinders?

18 MR. REID: Yes.

19 It could be done if you did it. There was
20 very little room -- a very small margin for a mistake. It
21 worked time after time after time until this.

22 Sure, there is no use in me lying to you.
23 It could be changed. Just like a lot of our mistakes in
24 life --

25 MR. SMITH: But it worked most of the time.

1 But when the thing was originally set up,
2 it wasn't set up with 14 ton cylinders in mind?

3 MR. REID: Now I don't know what they had
4 in mind. I just started out from the ground up and worked
5 my way up to be a supervisor.

6 Now what they designed for their purposes,
7 I didn't know; and I still don't.

8 In my opinion all I know is what I was
9 involved in. I have done it all.

10 MR. SMITH: So your involvement was satisfactory,
11 but you had to do it with extreme care to make everything
12 fit together right.

13 MR. REID: I know my operator was aware of
14 the problem when he put them on. I had cautioned him on
15 being sure that they were on right.

16 I feel like my operator, because I have gone
17 over it with him so thoroughly -- I feel like this wouldn't
18 have ever -- it would have never happened. As a matter of
19 fact if I had stayed, I don't think it would have ever
20 happened; but I didn't think it ever would. I wish I had
21 of stayed. I lost my supervision with the shift change.

22 MR. CAIN: How long have you been a shift
23 supervisor?

24 MR. REID: My goodness. Will you let me call
25 you back and give that to you? I started out as

1 assistant supervisor. It has been a while.

2 MR. CAIN: How long have you worked at the
3 plant?

4 MR. REID: I was the second group to hire
5 out, roughly 16 years. I started from the ground up,
6 looked at everything before it was ever put in service,
7 straightened out valvings that were put in wrong. I am
8 knowledgeable of the plant, and I know what goes on. I
9 know my procedures, and I know what is supposed to be done.

10 MR. CAIN: Would you say that the scales
11 then operated properly as far as you know?

12 MR. REID: As far as my part, when I left
13 shift, I had no doubt but what the scales were correct.
14 I mean with what was set on them.

15 I have no way of assuring you that they were.
16 I was assuming that they were right, and I still assume
17 they were.

18 MR. CAIN: What time did you leave the site
19 that day?

20 MR. REID: Roughly between 30 and 45 minutes
21 before shift change. After I had it secure and there were
22 two people there who were knowledgeable and where I had it
23 fully instructed, I went up to write my log. Between 30
24 and 45 minutes before shift change.

25 MR. CAIN: So that would have been about

1 7:15?

2 MR. REID: 7:15 will get mighty close.

3 MR. CAIN: So you left the filling station
4 about 7:15?

5 MR. REID: Yes, sir.

6 I communicated with my operator by radio after
7 this time. I even called him and told him to be sure to
8 make good clear relief. I went back and asked him after
9 this happened again to make sure, and he told me he did
10 what I -- you know, he gave him his information which I
11 feel like he did.

12 MR. CAIN: We understand that there is also
13 a gauge I guess upstream of the filter that would indicate
14 the vacuum.

15 MR. REID: The same gauge.

16 MR. CAIN: It is the same gauge?

17 MR. REID: Yes, sir. Our vacuum gauge.

18 MR. CAIN: Do you know whether that gauge
19 or the scale either one showed any indication of evacuation
20 of the tank by the end of the shift?

21 MR. REID: He still had a vacuum. At the
22 end of the shift he told me he still had a good vacuum
23 because then we switched to our secondary cold trap. These
24 are the ones that run like minus 50 and minus 60.

25 When one of those are hot, and you get

1 through draining it and you go back to cold. When they get
2 cool, they pull you a vacuum. He had switched to even using
3 one of these. He had a good vacuum.

4 I didn't look at it now.

5 MR. CAIN: I guess what I am asking you is
6 you have indicated that you could hear the material flowing,
7 but did any of the gauges or the scale or anything else tell
8 you that you were succeeding in your effort to evacuate the
9 tank?

10 MR. REID: Well, you know where I told you
11 the gauge where you block it off and the pressure would go
12 up. When I would open it, it would pull it back down to
13 a vacuum so you had to be getting a vacuum.

14 We were definitely getting through the line.
15 We evacuated an hour and 45 minutes and don't ask me how
16 much because I just flat couldn't answer you. I know we
17 did evacuate lots of UF₆ back out.

18 MR. CAIN: So you are saying that you blocked
19 off the line upstream of the gauge. You would read the
20 pressure in the tank. Then when you opened the valve, you --

21 MR. REID: You are talking about the UF₆
22 cylinder, right?

23 MR. CAIN: Yes, I am sorry.

24 You would read the pressure in the cylinder;
25 and if you opened the valve, that same gauge would be reading

1 the vacuum from the --

2 MR. REID: It would be read pressure or
3 vacuum, which one you had, you know.

4 Like I say, those drain lines are the same
5 lines that we evacuated back up in. Like I say, when you
6 have something hot and you cool it down, you pull yourself
7 to a vacuum.

8 We just used an off-line cold trap to do
9 our evacuating.

10 MR. SMITH: As you open this valve the 20 psi
11 that you are reading was the cylinder pressure; and as you
12 opened it, it dropped down to negative status. That showed
13 you that you had a vacuum now all the way into the tank.
14 The cylinder was under a vacuum?

15 MR. REID: You can go to extremes and prove --
16 You know, you can say there could have been a restriction
17 downstream in the filters, but I feel reasonably sure.

18 I could look you in the eye and tell you
19 that I do know or feel that everything was going through
20 right.

21 When Bill got the weights down to where they
22 would read -- One reason I can tell you. If he did
23 everything he told me he did, and I talked to him this
24 morning. I didn't go down there to interview him. I went
25 down there to make him relax with Rob Luke -- to help

1 him kind of relax.

2 He told me he did everything correctly as
3 far as moving my weight back; that he had moved that
4 counterweight. He said it weighed out 29,500. I feel sure
5 that Bill is telling the truth, and I feel that he was
6 trying to do a good job.

7 I feel like that was probably an accurate
8 weight. You know, it was over weight close to 2,000
9 pounds, not quite, but close to 2,000 pounds.

10 MR. SMITH: How hot was that cylinder?
11 I know you don't have temperature devises to measure
12 the temperature of the cylinder, but just being around
13 it?

14 MR. REID: The only way I have ever checked
15 it is when you first drain one, after they sit a little bit,
16 you can hold your hand there for a second before you have
17 to take it off. Now does that tell you?

18 MR. SMITH: This cylinder was at that
19 temperature?

20 MR. REID: I didn't feel of it.

21 MR. SMITH: Okay, you didn't know that.

22 MR. REID: I am reasonably sure it was,
23 but like you say it was layered out no doubt because of the
24 draining. The top should have been hotter than the bottom;
25 but like I say, I didn't feel of it.

1 I will look at my notes and see if there is
2 anything else I can volunteer.

3 MR. CAIN: What time did you leave the plant
4 site?

5 MR. REID: I didn't look at my watch. I was
6 officially relieved at 8:00. It can vary five minutes early
7 or five or ten late. Around 8:00 in the morning.

8 MR. CAIN: Okay.

9 Is over filling of a container like this --
10 has this ever happened to you before? Have you are any
11 of your operators ever experience this kind of problem
12 before?

13 MR. REID: Not exactly. Not in this
14 proportion. They have over filled some. They just turn
15 around and evacuate them right back out. You take care of
16 the problem right then. That is what I was trying to do.

17 At one time we had a north scale that was
18 hanging. Don't ask me the dates because I can't tell you.
19 At one time you had to shake it loose.

20 They called the scale people in, and they
21 checked and corrected the problem. I know one was over filled.
22 I don't know how much. It wasn't very much. Not go much
23 that we couldn't evacuate it back up.

24 We have had times that people have -- You
25 start to get one ready to ship and sometimes, you know, if

1 one has too much vapor pressure you have to heat it back up
2 and evacuate it back out to take care of this problem.

3 Then when they reweigh them we find them over
4 weight a little. Just like this deal where we were told
5 to get a minimum of 27,500 in this particular cylinder
6 and in all the 14 ton cylinders we are filling now because
7 we are trying to fill a full order.

8 Yes, there has been times. There has been
9 no deliberate such thing. They have taken care of them
10 well.

11 MR. CAIN: I take it in the times before
12 have these always been 10 ton cylinders or do you recall
13 that? Have they ever filled a 14 ton?

14 MR. REID: I never did.

15 MR. SMITH: When you say that you over
16 filled them, how much are you talking? A hundred pounds,
17 a couple of hundred pounds?

18 MR. REID: A hundred, possibly two, possibly
19 two fifty. All I can do is guess. My operator Pat Sanders
20 probably could have given you a better answer than me
21 because he is involved.

22 MR. SMITH: But approximately that size?

23 MR. REID: Roughly.

24 MR. SMITH: You have never seen one like
25 this, a couple of thousand?

1 MR. REID: Never anything close to this.

2 That is the reason I tried to make such
3 clear relief with Bill. I told him when I left to be
4 sure and keep someone at that station to make for sure
5 that -- My concern was that for some reason the line could
6 get restricted and we couldn't evacuate it back out. I
7 knew that we needed to get it out.

8 I left it the way I felt like it was as
9 safe as it could be made at the time.

10 MR. SMITH: Okay, the procedure if you do
11 over fill like this. The procedure is to vent under vacuum,
12 to draw off the UF₆.

13 That works pretty good if you still have
14 vapor and liquid. Did you ever get one that has set up on
15 you? It has solidified, and you find that it is over
16 weight. Can you draw down from the solid?

17 MR. REID: Very little. Yeah, a little bit.

18 When that has been discovered is after --
19 It would be after they heat it up to reevacuate because
20 of the vapor pressure and then reweigh it and find it being
21 over a little bit. Now I am not talking about a large
22 amount.

23 MR. SMITH: I was just kind of wondering
24 what you would do. Maybe you would never get in this
25 situation. If you had a significantly overweight cylinder

1 that had already set up and solidified?

2 MR. REID: Our procedure says, "Do not
3 heat the cylinder."

4 It states it loud and clear.

5 MR. SMITH: I guess you would follow the
6 other procedure and just take a lot longer?

7 MR. REID: That is the only thing I could do
8 without further instructions from my supervisor.

9 I have been pretty much a safety minded
10 individual and some have criticized me. I will take it
11 on safety any time.

12 MR. CAIN: Did you return to the plant after
13 the accident?

14 MR. REID: Yes, they called me I guess as
15 soon as they could get a hold of me. I got out here --
16 I had just gotten in bed. I don't know what time they
17 called me. I could check the guard. They logged it in --
18 somewhere around 2:00.

19 I just ran. I didn't even wear a watch or
20 anything.

21 MR. SMITH: So it was a couple of hours after?

22 MR. REID: At least probably.

23 Our relief Bill Bradley, the supervisor who
24 was on, was still trying to do things. I just relieved him
25 and told him to get to a doctor.

1 MR. SMITH: He is still in the hospital,
2 isn't he?

3 MR. REID: Yes.

4 He made the statement that everything on
5 TV was not right.

6 "If anyone should know, I would be the one;
7 and I have never been questioned by anybody yet."

8 He is wanting to give you his information.

9 MR. SMITH: How is he doing?

10 MR. REID: He seems to be doing good. Bill
11 has high blood pressure. I think by him being upset and
12 him feeling the burden of things and this man that worked
13 for him passing on and everything. I think probably the
14 other problems is worse than the UF₆ contamination. I
15 think that part is probably doing fine.

16 MR. SMITH: Do you think he would be up to
17 having us visit him?

18 MR. REID: His wife is right with him. If
19 he can keep his nerves down. Rob Luke went in this
20 morning. Rob wasn't there to interrogate him. He didn't
21 go for that reason. I should have gone. I had gone to
22 see him yesterday for the plant.

23 This morning I felt bad because I didn't
24 tell him that wasn't what Rob was there for.

25 I would advise you to talk to his wife to

1 MR. SMITH: I don't want to do anything
2 that would --

3 MR. REID: He is wanting to give his side
4 of the story.

5 He says, "Here I see it on TV and 90 percent
6 of it is not the truth."

7 MR. SMITH: He is the guy that was in charge
8 when it happened, and he is probably as familiar as anybody
9 perhaps other than --

10 MR. REID: I can promise you I can tell you
11 what I have told you up to when I left is correct. From
12 that point on what I have told you has been hearsay.

13 MR. CAIN: Is there anybody else on that
14 shift, that B shift, that is not hospitalized that could
15 give us some good information on what happened?

16 MR. REID: I don't know how he had his
17 people stationed. Let me see.

18 MR. CAIN: I have got a list of the people
19 here.

20 MR. REID: Read me the list.

21 MR. CAIN: "Brewer."

22 MR. REID: Brewer was off. He was the shift
23 supervisor because the other man was assistant supervisor.

24 MR. CAIN: I see. There are --

25 MR. REID: There are two supervisors on a

1 shift. Then we relieve each other for holidays and days off.

2 MR. CAIN: One of the other names that I see
3 there is "Anderson" and "Gilbrath".

4 MR. REID: Anderson was a maintenance man
5 and Gilbrath was a assistant control room operator.

6 MR. CAIN: "Henry".

7 MR. REID: I think she was on utilities.
8 I don't think she could give you too much. She could give
9 you about what happened afterwards.

10 MR. CAIN: "Valour".

11 MR. REID: A parts man.

12 MR. CAIN: All I have is initials "M. Falleur."

13 "It looks like it has been typed in recently so it may be
14 somebody new.

15 "Padget, Sumpter."

16 MR. REID: Padget and Sumpter, I know where
17 they were at because they were both down at raffinate
18 treatment which is a long ways off.

19 MR. CAIN: How about "Swearingen".

20 MR. REID: I don't know about Swearingen.

21 MR. CAIN: Then there is "H. P. Neito".

22 MR. REID: He could give you probably
23 information after the release. I spoke to him. He just
24 got out of the hospital yesterday.

25 He could give you what happened after the

1 release, but I doubt he could give you any information
2 before the evacuation.

3 It would have to be one of the operators.
4 This Harrison boy that was his area.

5 Is that all they have on there? I don't
6 know who they had working the cell room. Probably whoever
7 they had working the cell room -- that is right next to it.

8 Can you give me any more names?

9 MR. CAIN: That is everybody that is
10 listed on B shift.

11 MR. REID: You might could call the plant
12 and find out who was in the cell room. He hadn't gone to
13 lunch so no one had relieved him for lunch.

14 Now I say he hadn't. It was lunch period,
15 and I think the first group had gone in, and he was still
16 out.

17 I am sorry I can't help you on that. I am
18 just not involved on that shift.

19 MR. CAIN: Is Bradley over at --

20 MR. REID: He is over at Sparks Hospital in
21 Fort Smith.

22 They were talking about releasing him. He
23 thought he would get released today, but they didn't
24 release him today.

25 MR. SMITH: Well, that is all for now.

1 MR. REID: If you have any questions, call
2 me. If you want me to take you out and show you the area,
3 I will.

4 MR. SMITH: We may.

5 Let me give you one of my cards. If you
6 think of anything more that you want to add, give me a
7 call any time.

8 MR. CAIN: I know one other thing I want to
9 ask. The target load for a cylinder in this case would have
10 been 27,500, is that right?

11 MR. REID: That is what they wanted in this --
12 all our 14 ton cylinders we are filling now. 27,500.

13 We got a memo on that. They didn't want
14 less than that. As close to 27,560 I believe is the
15 maximum according to our procedures.

16 Was Pat Sanders of any help to you?

17 MR. SMITH: Yeah.

18 MR. REID: I told him to be sure and tell
19 the truth and give it -- whatever it took.

20 MR. SMITH: Yes, he was quite helpful.

21 MR. REID: I feel like I have trained him.
22 I feel like we were doing the right thing. I feel like
23 if we would have stayed there it wouldn't have happened,
24 but you never know.

25 I would definitely kept evacuating even if

1 I wasn't showing any loss until it cooled off or at least
2 set it outside. I am not blaming anyone.

3 MR. SMITH: All right.

4 Thank you.

5 (Whereupon, at 2:30 p.m. the interview in
6 the above-entitled matter concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that this is the transcript of the proceedings held before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on Monday, January 6, 1986, in the matter of Sequoyah Fuels Corporation, and that this is a full and correct transcription of the proceedings.

Judy Bradley
Reporter