

*Return to Charles Edwards
D.H. Bettendorf*

50-205-Sub A

SEP 19 1963

Dear Mr. Clausen:

By letter dated August 14, 1963 you enclosed a copy of a letter which you received from a constituent, Mr. P. F. Corey, of Sonoma, California. You asked for my comments concerning the points raised by Mr. Corey relative to the nuclear power reactor proposed by Pacific Gas & Electric Company for construction at Bodega Bay.

The various technical safety reviews of this application have not been completed and the public hearing required by law, therefore, has not yet been held. For these reasons, I am unable to state a position on the merits of this case at the present time. However, concerning the spread of radioactive fission products to the environment, there are general observations which can be made with respect to reactors of the type proposed.

While it is true that radioactive materials are generated within the core of an operating reactor, there are, generally speaking, several barriers to prevent the spread of such materials to the surrounding environment. The first such barrier is metal cladding which surrounds the fuel. The second is the reactor vessel and other components of the closed primary system, and the third is the steel and concrete containment vessel.

Relative to the proximity of the reactor to the San Andreas fault, at the request of the Commission, the U. S. Geological Survey has been conducting a study of the geology of Bodega Bay since early May. In addition, expert consultants have been retained to assist the AEC regulatory staff in evaluating Pacific Gas & Electric Company's application with respect to the seismology of the area and the structural design of the proposed plant. Final action on the Pacific Gas & Electric Company application will not be taken until the report by the U. S. Geological Survey has been received and evaluated.

A construction permit will not be issued unless the Commission, following a public hearing and a decision by the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board and consideration of all factors bearing upon safety, is convinced

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Honorable Don H. Clausen

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that the proposed facility can be constructed and operated at the proposed location without undue risk to the health and safety of the public. I might point out that matters of zoning, conservation and the esthetics of the proposed site are not within the jurisdiction of the Atomic Energy Commission and will, therefore, not be considered at the public hearing. The date of the hearing, which will be held at Santa Rosa, California has not yet been determined. A public announcement of the hearing will be issued.

A copy of a pamphlet describing the Commission's procedures relating to the licensing of power reactors is enclosed as of possible interest to Mr. Corey.

Thank you for your letter.

Sincerely yours,

Don H. Clausen

Chairman

Honorable Don H. Clausen
House of Representatives

Enclosure:
Pamphlet

bcc: Chairman (2)
Cong. Liaison (2)
Secretariat (2)
Harold L. Price, REG
OGC
Formal
Supplemental
Public Document Room (2)
Charles Edwards, DLR

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