LLOYD BENTSEN
TEXAS

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE
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JOINT ECONOMIC
JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

June 9, 1989

Mr. Carlton C. Kammerer, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs
The United States Nuclear Regulatory
Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Kammerer:

Enclosed for your review is a copy of a letter I have received from Mr. J.C. Dodson of Arlington, Texas. I would certainly appreciate your sending me any pertinent information that you might have in this regard.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Bentsen

Lloyd Bentsen

Enclosure

PLEASE REPLY TO:

961 Federal Building
Austin, Texas 78701

J. C. DODSON ENTERPRISES
112 DIVISION CT. • PHONE 460-1991-460-1992
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76012

May 18, 1989

U.S. Senator Lloyd Bentsen
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bentsen:

I am enclosing a copy of an article that appeared in the Fort Worth Star Telegram on May 16, 1989, regarding the Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant, near Glen Rose, Texas. I hope that you will take the time to read it.

I have always been opposed to this Nuclear Plant. I own a ranch within four miles of it and have family members living on this ranch. You can understand that any and all leakages are a major concern to me.

Along with the occurrence of leakages of possible radioactive water, there have been far too many mishaps and delays in scheduled timings, along with flaws in design and construction and numerous other problems. All of these have increased the cost of the plant to unbelievable sums, and of course this cost is passed on to the taxpayers. I would like to emphasize here that we, and many, many others that this has been discussed with, would much rather pay for the plant and it not open. There is no way to dispose of the waste and therein lies the greatest danger. We must have relief from all of this. I request that this Nuclear Plant be shut down immediately, and I urge you to do whatever is in your power of jurisdiction to see that it is shut down and closed completely.

I appreciate your cooperation.

Yours very truly,

J. C. Dodson

JCD:jm
Encl.

Tuesday P.M., May 16, 1989 ★

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Tarrant/Texas

Nuclear plant mishap confirmed by officials

BY MICHAEL WHITELEY
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

For about 15 minutes on April 23, leaking check valves at Comanche Peak nuclear power plant forced water from the reactor's steam generators into a set of back-up piping outside the plant's containment building, federal officials confirmed yesterday.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials and TU Electric, the plant's owner, said the accident blistered pipes and peeled away paint from an auxiliary system. But NRC spokesman Joe Gilliland said there were no injuries and no evidence of a failure of the piping system.

The accident occurred during a hot functional test that produced a small amount of electricity from conventional power sources as utility officials checked cooling and heating systems in an attempt to win a nuclear power license.

The utility is still awaiting a license to load nuclear fuel. But a TU Electric official said the accident could have allowed water contaminated with a small level of radioactivity to flow outside of the main system and into the back-up piping beyond the walls of the containment building, had the reactor been loaded with nuclear fuel.

(More on NUCLEAR on Page 18)

A seven-member NRC inspection team arrived at the plant, near Glen Rose about 45 miles southwest of Fort Worth, yesterday and began what is expected to be a monthlong review of the potential damage and causes for the accident.

"Of significance is going to be the actions necessary to find out exactly what happened and what will be required to prevent their reoccurrence," said TU Electric spokesman Dave Fiorelli. "But we expect fuel loading, which is scheduled for October, to begin on schedule."

Gilliland said the incident occurred when leaking check valves for three of the four steam generators in the plant's Unit 1 reactor allowed water to flow back into an auxiliary piping system used as a secondary to the plant's main reactor pipes.

The nuclear reactor is equipped with a primary piping system that funnels water through the reactor. The water is heated and turned to steam, which turns the plant's turbines. The auxiliary system moves water from a storage tank to the steam generators during periods when the reactor is being started up and shut down.

Fiorelli said plant operators opened a check valve during the April 23 test and then closed it when they noticed that water levels in three of the plant's steam generators had begun to drop.

"I think the total event was on the order of magnitude of about 15 minutes," Fiorelli said. "It is possible for very small amounts of radioactivity to get into the secondary water. But it is not what you would call highly radioactive water."

Design and construction flaws have delayed the licensing of the $9.1 billion plant for more than a decade.

But the plant's licensing woes appeared to be fading when it struck a $4.5 million settlement with its chief opponent, Citizens for Sound Energy, last July.

The NRC later approved the settlement and has endorsed a multimillion-dollar plan produced by the utility to correct flaws at the plant.