



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

July 17, 1989

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The Honorable Paul S. Sarbanes
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Sarbanes:

I am responding to your letter of June 14, 1989, concerning the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant. The Commission agrees that the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BG&E), in addition to the short-term corrective actions already identified, must effectively implement its Performance Improvement Plan to correct identified weaknesses at the facility. We consider it essential that our licensees remain accountable for the safe operation of their facilities, are able to assess their own shortcomings, and can develop and implement appropriate corrective actions to resolve identified problems.

BG&E has committed to institute corrective actions for the pressurizer heater leakage identified at Unit 2 and the weaknesses manifested in (1) the control of system status, (2) the control of work activities, and (3) procedural control and compliance. On May 25, 1989, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued a Confirmatory Action Letter reiterating our understanding of these commitments and the necessity for NRC concurrence with the corrective actions taken. These commitments will ensure that immediate, short-term corrective actions are implemented prior to the restart of either unit at the Calvert Cliffs site.

With regard to longer-term efforts to improve facility performance, on April 7, 1989, BG&E submitted to the NRC a Performance Improvement Plan, which was developed to identify the root causes of the facility's declining performance and to specify the actions that will be taken to improve performance. The licensee will also submit by July 31, 1989, a revision to the Plan to provide an in-depth analysis of the actions and resources required to attain the goal of improved plant performance. To ensure that BG&E has adequately assessed the root causes and that appropriate corrective actions are identified, scheduled, and implemented, the NRC has established a Calvert Cliffs Assessment Panel, composed of senior NRC managers from our Region I and headquarters offices, to evaluate BG&E's performance improvement efforts as outlined in the Plan.

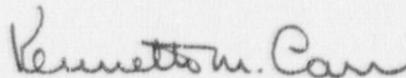
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I can assure you that the NRC will continue to maintain its increased inspection coverage at the facility and to verify the adequacy of BG&E's efforts to correct identified weaknesses. It is our hope that, through the combined efforts of the licensee and the NRC, Calvert Cliffs can be restored to its prior status as a high quality plant. We will keep you fully informed of our activities at Calvert Cliffs to ensure that the facility will be operated safely.

Sincerely,


Kenneth M. Carr.

Identical ltr for: The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510



UNITED STATES
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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

ACTION

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM:

DUE: 07/03/89

EDO CONTROL: 0004555

DOC DT: 06/14/89

FINAL REPLY:

Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes
Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski

TO:

Chairman Zech

FOR SIGNATURE OF:

** PRI **

CRC NO: 89-0584

Chairman

DESC:

CONCERNS ABOUT THE OPERATIONAL SAFETY VIOLATIONS
AT CALVERT CLIFFS

ROUTING:

Stello
Taylor
Thompson
Blaha
Russell, RI

DATE: 06/21/89

ASSIGNED TO:

NRR

CONTACT:

Murley

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

NRR RECEIVED: JUNE 21, 1989

ACTION: DRPR:VARGA

NRR ROUTING: MURLEY/SNIEZEK

PARTLOW

MIRAGLIA

CRUTCHFIELD

GILLESPIE

MOSSBURG

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 14, 1989

Honorable Lando W. Zech, Jr.
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Zech:

We are writing to express our concerns about the operational safety violations at the Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant.

We have been fortunate in Maryland that, until very recently, there have been no serious problems at Calvert Cliffs, such as those that characterized the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Plant. Indeed, for over a decade, Calvert Cliffs was widely regarded as a model plant. However, the safety and procedural violations which led the NRC last December to place the facility on the "watch list" of nuclear plants requiring close monitoring, and the new violations recently cited by the NRC's special team inspection, have undermined public confidence in the operations and management of the nuclear station.

To their credit, Baltimore Gas and Electric officials acknowledge the downward slide in their nuclear safety record and have expressed a commitment to make procedural compliance and plant safety the first priority in operating Calvert Cliffs. The Company's recent decision to delay start-up of the two reactors until corrective procedural and maintenance actions are taken is a positive first step in demonstrating this commitment. However, further efforts and effective implementation of a corrective action plan will be needed before confidence in the facility can be restored.

There is no room for complacency in the operations of an atomic power plant. Every precaution must be taken to ensure that nuclear power plants operate under the strictest of safety procedures. In this regard, the NRC's actions with respect to Calvert Cliffs appear to be timely and appropriate.

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Lando W. Zech, Jr.

June 14, 1989

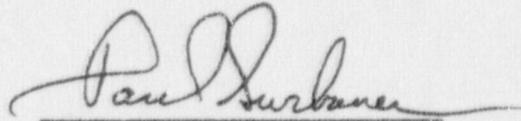
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We ask that you continue to keep us informed of the NRC's efforts to assure that the management and employees of the facility will follow the strict procedures required to safely run the plant.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



Paul S. Sarbanes
United States Senator