



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

November 12, 1980

Honorable John F. Ahearne
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR DATA LINK

Dear Dr. Ahearne:

Since the Committee's letter of May 6, 1980, we have made some further studies of the NRC Staff's proposed Nuclear Data Link (NDL). We have also discussed the NDL with the NRC Staff at the 246th ACRS meeting (October 9-11, 1980) and have examined NUREG-0730, "Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Reactor Data for the NRC Operations Center." We have some concerns about several aspects of the NDL as proposed and recommend that further investigation precede a commitment to a specific system.

A principal concern we have is that the NDL, as proposed, and its interfacing with reactor instrumentation may decrease the reliability of the reactor system and thereby increase risk. We have not seen evidence of a detailed analysis that would demonstrate that the reactor system is not adversely affected. Also, we note a concern on the part of the NRC Staff during its review of the ANO-2 plant where the staff argued that the introduction of nonsafety grade equipment into an information loop which included a plant computer and an operator resulted in an unacceptable level of risk.

A better definition of the proposed use of the system and careful consideration of any potential for clouding the lines of responsibility would permit us and others to judge better than is now possible the merits and possible disadvantages of the NDL.

Sincerely yours,

Milton S. Plesset
Milton S. Plesset
Chairman