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RMS JOSEPH P. HENDRIE, CHAIRMAN

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON DC 20555



TODAY THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM WAS SENT TO MEMBERS OF THE LOUISIANA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION:

"WE HAVE AN URGENT SITUATION IN LOUISIANA WHICH NEEDS YOUR INDULGENCE IN THE FOLLOWING DETAILS. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT IT DELAY PROCESSING AND THE SUBSEQUENT ISSUANCE OF THE OPERATING LICENSE FOR OUR WATERFORD-3 NUCLEAR UNIT FOR A PERIOD OF AN ADDITIONAL 6-MONTHS AND GRAND GULF UNIT

ONE IN MISSISSIPPI FOR 12-MONTHS, BOTH A PART OF THE MIDDLE SOUTH UTILITIES SYSTEM.

IF THESE DEFERRALS WERE TO BE APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION, A SUBSEQUENT SHORTAGE OF ELECTRIC ENERGY WOULD OCCUR ON THE MIDDLE SOUTH UTILITIES SYSTEM IN LOUISIANA, ARKANSAS AND MISSISSIPPI DURING THE SUMMER PEAK SEASONS IN 1981 AND 1982 AND COULD RESULT IN BLACKOUTS.

THIS WOULD OCCUR AS A RESULT OF THE LOSS OF SOME 2360 MEGAWATTS OF MSU BASELOAD CAPACITY FOR WHICH WE KNOW OF NO SOURCE OF REPLACEMENT AT THE PRESENT TIME. WHY? SIMPLY BECAUSE THE NRC STAFF ALSO RECOMMENDS THE DELAY OF NUCLEAR UNITS IN AREAS CONTIGUOUS TO LOUISIANA AND THIS

MEANS OUR USUAL SOURCES OF REPLACEMENT ENERGY WOULD ALSO BE IN DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE SOUTHERN REGION.

DURING THE STAFF'S PROPOSED DELAY PERIOD, WE ESTIMATE THAT THE LOST NUCLEAR CAPABILITY AND ENERGY WOULD REQUIRE THE CONSUMPTION OF AN ADDITIONAL 18,000,000 BARRELS OF OIL IF, INDEED, WE HAD SUFFICIENT FACILITIES TO BURN OIL UNDER OUR BOILERS. THE FUEL COST DIFFERENTIAL IN THE TIMEFRAME OF 1981-'82 WOULD BE AT A MINIMUM, \$195,000,000. IF, HOWEVER, THE REPLACEMENT ENERGY MUST BE PURCHASED ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS FROM VARIOUS OTHER UTILITIES, THE COSTS, OBVIOUSLY, WOULD BE FAR HIGHER.

THE DELAYS NOW CONTEMPLATED BY THE STAFF WOULD ADD, BY

CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATES, TO THE CONSTRUCTION COSTS OF WATERFORD-3 AND GRAND GULF ONE, ONE-THIRD OF A BILLION DOLLARS, WHICH WOULD ULTIMATELY HAVE TO BE BORNE BY OUR RESPECTIVE CUSTOMERS.

FURTHER, IF GRAND GULF ONE COMPLETION DATE IS DELAYED BEYOND DECEMBER OF 1982, THE MSU-OPERATING COMPANIES (INCLUDING LOUISIANA POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY) ARE OBLIGATE TO PAY AN ADDITIONAL \$250,000,000 A YEAR FOR MSU SYSTEM FINANCING CHARGES.

ASIDE FROM THESE MENACING DOLLAR FIGURES, THE SPECTER OF THE UNAVAILABILITY OF ELECTRIC ENERGY IN THIS TRI-STATE AREA IS UNCONSCIONABLE. TO SAY NOTHING OF ECONOMIC CHAOS.

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FURTHER, AS WE ARE LED TO BELIEVE, THE REASON FOR THE DELAY IN NO WAY INVOLVES THE SAFETY OF THE RESPECTIVE PLANTS. RATHER, THE PROPOSED DELAYS ARE OCCASIONED BY THE HEAVY PAPER-WORK LOAD IMPOSED ON THE STAFF FOLLOWING THREE ISLAND THE UNUSUALLY HEAVY DEMANDS ON THE STAFF TO ADDRESS ENDLESS CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS AND INDIVIDUAL INQUIRIES. THEREFORE, WE ARE CONFIDENT YOU RECOGNIZE THAT IF NRC IS UNDERSTAFFED TO MEET ITS PRESENT WORKLOAD, THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM IS NOT A DEFERRAL OF LICENSING PROCEDURES, BUT RATHER, THE IMMEDIATE ADDITION OF SUFFICIENT PERSONNEL TO EXPEDITE RATHER THAN DELAY THESE URGENTLY NEEDED NUCLEAR UNITS FOR ALL AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES.

FINALLY, WE BELIEVE YOU WILL AGREE THAT IT IS INCUMBERT UPON YOU, FOR THE WELL BEING OF THE CONSUMERS IN LOUISIANA, TO INTERCEDE WITH THE NRC TO AVOID ANY ACTION OR INACTION ON THEIR PART WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE PROPOSED STAFF DELAY IN THE PROCESSING OF OPERATING LICENSES. WE UNDERSTAND THE NEXT NRC MEETING WILL BE HELD WEDNESDAY, MAY 30TH.

FURTHER, WE ARE CONFIDENT YOU WILL CONTACT THE NECESSARY CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES TO PROVIDE THE FUNDS NECESSARY FOR THE NRC TO ACQUIRE COMPETENT STAFF PERSONNEL TO CARRY OUT THE CONGRESSIONAL MANDATES TO NRC.

AS WE OPENED, THIS IS URGENT TO LOUISIANS AND WE TRULY APPRECIATE YOUR INDOULGENCE AND PERSONAL ACTION IN ANSWER TO

OUR REQUEST ON THEIR BEHALF.

JAMES M WYATT, PRESIDENT  
LOUISIANA POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY  
NEWORLEANS LA 70174

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