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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Richmond 23219

John N. Dalton
Governor

October 4, 1979

Mr. Victor Gilinsky
Commissioner
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Commissioner Gilinsky:

Thank you very much for your response to my letter inquiring about the licensing of Virginia Electric and Power Company's North Anna 2 nuclear power station. In your letter you stated: "The commissioners have decided to review the license application themselves before issuance of the license. The form of this review is in the process of being decided." I cannot help but infer from these statements that the licensing procedures of the commission are being revised just as North Anna 2 is ready for final action by the commission. I am greatly concerned that these revisions in the licensing process may cause delay and avoidable economic burdens on Virginia utility rate payers.

I recognize that the commission must take every measure that it deems necessary to assure safe operations of nuclear power stations. However, I feel that I must emphasize that every day of delay in safe operation of North Anna 2 adds to the large and growing burden of energy costs being borne by Virginia residents. I am informed that each day of delay adds more than \$300,000 to the cost of replacement fuels that Vepco must purchase to provide electricity that could have been generated by nuclear power. Moreover, each day of delay adds to the total cost of the nuclear station that must be paid by utility customers over the life of the plant. The commission, of course, cannot sacrifice reasonable safety assurance for economic considerations. However, I strongly urge the commission not to let its personal involvement in the licensing process or its decisions about the "form" of the licensing review delay the effective date of the operation of North Anna 2.

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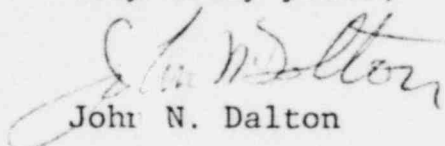
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I regret that my correspondence with you and other members of the commission may, as you suggested, add to the regulatory burden of notice to the public and to parties of the North Anna 2 proceeding. I feel, however, that the economic interests of the Commonwealth and her citizens require me to encourage expeditious licensing of nuclear power stations in Virginia by your commission. Moreover, I think that it is important that my statements on this subject be made a part of the public record. In obtaining information about the operation of nuclear power stations in Virginia and their regulation by the NRC, I will continue to rely upon less formal contacts with members of the NRC staff. I am deeply appreciative of the cooperation that I have received from the staff to date.

With all good wishes, I am

Very truly yours,



John N. Dalton

JND/rbg

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