

PROD. & UTIL. REG. 50-382



March 19, 1982

Dear Mr. Kelly:

As a new resident of Louisiana, I have recently become very interested in the public hearings on Waterford III to be held this Tuesday, March 23, in New Orleans, and as a result I was very disappointed to learn that they had been set during business hours on a weekday. This is a clear indication, to me at least, that the NRC is much more interested in avoiding public opinion than hearing it, since my chances of being heard during the hearing are almost nonexistent. My feelings on the Waterford matter, however, are so strong that I simply cannot let them go unexpressed, and in the event that I cannot speak at the hearing, I would like to let you know how I feel about nuclear power in Louisiana.

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I am fairly confident that both supporters and critics of nuclear power will agree that we cannot afford nuclear accidents, and yet I am afraid that our present situation makes accidents only a question of time. From the standpoint of technology, the obvious question of waste disposal is reason enough to shut down every plant in the country. Electrical fires, stuck valves, and other systems failures within the plants are as nothing when compared against the enormous technological failure at the end of the nuclear power cycle, which is resulting in filled -- and over-filled -- ~~the~~ fuel storage ponds containing lethal radioactive garbage. As long as we have no accident-proof plan for waste disposal, Waterford III is not safe, and I would be a fool not to oppose a new source of radioactive waste when no one has yet come up with a dependable means

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of disposing of the wastes which already exist.

Even worse, Waterford III, like every nuclear plant in this country, has a built-in source of accident that defies even the most sophisticated technology: people. There is no way to change the fact that where there are people, there will be mistakes, and we cannot afford to be fallible in dealing with radioactivity. I have read accounts of the Browns Ferry crisis in 1975 and of Three Mile Island in 1979, and I have begun to believe that a more serious accident is not only possible, but likely, if we continue to support nuclear power plants. Even the most intelligent and highly-trained human being can be inattentive or make an



error in judgment, so that even an infallible nuclear technology (which has yet to be seen) would be left open to accident by the fallibility of its human operators.

These arguments are nothing new, but I believe them to be inescapable; we do not have an adequate means of protecting ourselves from nuclear wastes, and human plant operators are going to make human mistakes. To bring Waterford III on line without resolving the questions of unfinished nuclear technology and human fallibility is to increase the possibility of a nuclear accident in Louisiana, and I live in Louisiana. I can't afford accidents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Lillian Smith Clementi

Lillian S. Clementi  
#3-C 1925 Delachaux  
New Orleans, Louisiana

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