



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 2, 1994

TO: Secretary of the Commission
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Enclosed is a letter from a constituent concerning a matter related to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. This information was sent to the office of Vice President Gore.

On behalf of the Vice President, I am forwarding this material with the request that the issues be addressed in an appropriate and expeditious manner. An acknowledgement of receipt and a notification of this referral has been sent.

Please respond directly to the correspondent. No reply to this office is necessary.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bill Mason
Director of Correspondence
for the Vice President

BM/wem
Enclosure

9408220180 940815
PDR ADOCK 05000498
PDR

NRC

Vice President Al Gore
The White House
Washington DC 20500

Shaun Stenshol
P.O. Box 684694
Austin TX 78768-4694

Dear Al,

Enclosed you will find a copy of a letter I'm sending to members of the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and a news article which recently appeared in the Houston Chronicle.

It is my sincerest wishes that something can finally be done about the dangerous South Texas Nuclear Plant. It's well established that the plant is not safe nor financially viable. I hope you can be of some help.

Sincerely,

Shaun Stenshol



MAY 23 1994

5/8/94

Representative John Dingell
U.S. House of Reps.
Washington DC 20515

Shaun Stenshol
P.O. Box 684694
Austin TX 78768-4694

re: South Texas Nuclear Plant investigation.

Dear Rep. Dingell:

I'm very pleased that Congress has finally decided to check into the numerous safety and mismanagement problems at the South Texas Nuclear Plant (STNP), which is operated by Houston Lighting and Power (HL&P). There are many of us who live downwind of STNP that are very concerned about the potentially serious consequences of our poorly run nuclear plant and the failure of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to act properly on complaints by whistle blowers.

It seems to me that while your Subcommittee is investigating allegations involving safety deficiencies, worker harassment and intimidation, document falsification and other critical plant operations, it would be in the public interest to shut down STNP.

In 1987 the Government Accountability Project (GAP), a group that provides legal help to whistle-blowers, investigated several whistle-blower allegations at STNP. They presented their findings of over 700 allegations to the NRC with the hope that NRC would conduct a painstaking investigation before the plant received its full-power license. The NRC did investigate what became known as the GAP allegations. And people who prepared the GAP case say the investigation was a mockery, a waste of NRC's last and best chance to see that the plant was built correctly.

But the NRC is also under investigation. And that doesn't surprise me. They have shown "No Real Concern" about the serious problems at STNP. I have been to two NRC public hearings (which are only open for public observation, not public input) on STNP and have listened to Joe Callan (NRC Region IV Administrator) talk about how mistakes that continue to occur at STNP should not be happening because of all the redundant barriers that are built into the plant. And after he gets done slapping HL&P on the wrist for their wrong doings, he gives them the okay to continue business as usual. I get the feeling that NRC is just a puppet agency to the nuclear industry.

We can't just sit by and watch another Three Mile Island or Chernobyl happen. Do everything in your power to shut down STNP at least while you're conducting the investigation.

HL&P is going to do everything in their power to keep the plant on-line, regardless of safety. As a recent quote from Graham Painter, chief press spokesperson for HL&P, would

indicate: "I believe the (STNP) plant will operate well. That's the line and we're sticking to it" : Houston Business Journal, March 21 1994.

Sincerely,

Shaun Stenshol

cc: Members of the Subcommittee on Oversight
& Investigations of the Committee on
Energy and Commerce: John Dingell, Mich. (Chairperson),
Sherwood Brown, Ohio, Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, Penn.,
Henry Waxman, Cal., Cardiss Collins, Ill., Ron Wyden, Oregon,
John Bryant, Tex., Dan Schaefer, Colo., Carlos Moorhead,
Cal., Joe Barton, Tex., Fred Upton, Mich.,

U.S. Rep. Jake Pickle,
U.S. Senator Phil Gramm,
U.S. Senator Kay Hutchison,
President Bill Clinton,

N-plant allegations scrutinized

Congressmen seek HL&P files

By JOHN TOTH
Houston Chronicle

A congressional subcommittee is investigating allegations of document falsification, worker harassment and intimidation at the South Texas nuclear power plant.

Also being probed are allegations that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission failed to act properly on complaints by whistle blowers who were trying to alert regulators to serious problems at the troubled plant near Bay City in Matagorda County.

U.S. Rep. John P. Dingell, D-Mich., chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, has requested Houston Lighting & Power officials to produce documents pertaining to the allegations by May 18.

HL&P spokesman Graham Painter said it appears that all the issues touched on by the letter have been addressed and resolved.

HL&P is the managing partner of the power plant. Other owners are Central Power & Light in Corpus Christi and the cities of San Antonio and Austin.

In a letter dated April 26 to Don Jordan, HL&P's chairman and chief executive officer, Dingell cited four areas of concern that the subcommittee is investigating.

- Severe deficiencies in the plant's quality assurance and quality control program.
- Instances of document and procedure falsification and fraud.
- Worker harassment and intimidation by plant management.
- Problems related to safety and security of the plant.

A subcommittee staff member, who asked not to be named, said the allegations



Dingell

STNP

Continued from Page 33A.

deal with past and present problems and were gathered during interviews conducted with former and current employees.

One area of concern, he said, was the practice of having certified craftsmen sign for maintenance work performed by uncertified workers, making it appear on paper that the certified personnel did the repair.

The harassment allegations are based on interviews and complaints filed by former employees, he said.

"I can't get any more specific, but

there seems to be a fairly oppressive atmosphere," he said.

HL&P has received the Dingell letter, said Painter, and will cooperate fully with the committee.

Another item the subcommittee is examining is why the agency didn't step in quicker to resolve the problems that led to the February 1993 shutdown of both reactors.

"What we want to know is whether institutionally HL&P and the NRC have the ability to run this thing well enough after we go away because we won't be looking at this forever," the subcommittee member said.

NRC spokesman Joe Gilliland of Arlington said the agency plans to provide the committee all the information it needs, noting it has cooper-

ated in other unrelated investigations by the panel.

The subcommittee investigation will review problems at the plant dating to the 1980s and will look for evidence of a pattern that the facility has been "run on the cheap," lacking such resources as an adequate work force and equipment, the staff member said.

A hearing on the plant could be held later this year or early 1995, he said.

David Lamb of Houston, a former plant worker who turned whistle blower and then was laid off, said he was one of several former employees interviewed at length by subcommittee staffers about three weeks ago.

"I'm pleased they are doing it," he said. "I only regret that it didn't happen two years ago when this was fresh on everybody's mind."

After a change in the HL&P's management team and more than a year of being idle, Unit 1 returned to 100 percent power on April 8. Unit 1 returned to service for the first time Feb. 25, but was shut down again three days later by the steam generator leak. It began generating power again March 22.

Unit 2 is scheduled to return to commercial service May 22.

The subcommittee has no regulatory authority, but because of its stature, the hearings — or any report it might issue — would draw attention and thus could result in changes.