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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 9, 1971

Mr. James R. Schlesinger  
Chairman  
Atomic Energy Commission  
Washington, D. C. 20545

Dear Mr. Schlesinger:

This is to acknowledge the response of former Chairman Seaborg to my letter of June 24th, in which I requested information on the effect of emergency core cooling system (ECCS) failures on certain nuclear powered reactors.

In regard to the reanalysis being required of the emergency core cooling systems at Oyster Creek and at other plants being constructed or planned for New Jersey. I would appreciate being informed of the results of the reanalysis as soon as is practicable.

In that same vein, I would also appreciate a response from you on the following points:

- 1) Will the reanalysis of the ECCS in operation at Oyster Creek, under construction at Salem, and at other plants being planned for New Jersey in Union County, at Forked River, and at Newbold Island, be performed on a small semi-scale reactor mockup similar to those used in the Idaho tests? *still*
- 2) Upon what was the preliminary information on the Oyster Creek plant which the AEC received from General Electric Company based? Small semi-scale model tests, theoretical calculations, testing of actual equipment, or a combination of these three? *DJ*
- 3) If there are significant differences between the small semi-scale experiments and large power reactors, are there any other models more similar in construction and performance to large reactors upon which the AEC can base its reliance? *SE*

Date 9/16/71  
Time 4:30 PM

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- 4) Since it is my understanding that there have been errors experienced in estimating fuel-cladding temperatures, given the critical importance of the ECCS whose effectiveness is now suspect, should nuclear power reactors be permitted to produce their normal electrical power output? *Stille*
- 5) On page 2 of your July 26th letter, you state that ~~the "Commission may authorize full power operation of the reactor (if a limitation were imposed) for a limited period"~~. What type of administrative procedure would be employed by the Commission in this event? *F.S.*
- 6) Given the AEC's defense-in-depth concept, is there any other system present in the normal reactor to reduce the temperature of a molten core, if the ECCS fails? *Stille*
- 7) If the primary assurance of reactor safety in a nuclear power plant is by "correctly designing, constructing and operating the reactor", is there also a process of extensive testing of all systems before normal operations are allowed? *D/S*
- 8) What is the earliest possible time that the emergency core cooling systems could be improved as opposed to a July 1, 1974, limit? *F.S.*

In closing, let me state that the doubts on the reliability of the ECCS raised by these test failures should cause the AEC to postpone indefinitely administrative procedures to modify the license of Jersey Central Power and Light Company to operate the Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant Unit No. 1 at increased power levels, until full-scale tests can be conducted to demonstrate the effectiveness of safety features. *F.S.*

Again, I wish to emphasize that your assistance in answering these questions will be greatly appreciated.

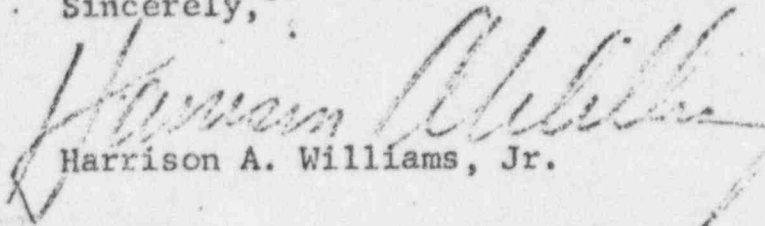
Mr. James R. Schl<sup>er</sup>

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With best wishes,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harrison Williams, Jr.", written in dark ink.

Harrison A. Williams, Jr.

HAW:rdbb