

Department of Energy  
Washington, D.C. 20501

MAY 25 1983

**ACTION**

Mr. William Dircks  
Executive Director for Operations  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Dircks:

The enclosed correspondence has been directed to the Department of Energy.  
The contents indicate that an appropriate reply also should be made by the  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Accordingly, we are forwarding a copy to you  
for consideration, along with a copy of our reply.

Sincerely,

*Victor W. Trebules, Jr.*  
Victor W. Trebules, Jr.  
Acting Manager, External Affairs  
Division of Plans and Evaluation  
Office of Nuclear Energy

Enclosures

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March 31, 1983

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*Mark MP*  
*file 83-47*

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President of the United States  
White House  
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. Reagan:

Subject: Safety problems at Nuclear Power Plants

I would like to congratulate you on the job you are doing. I would also like to congratulate you on getting the economy headed back in the right direction. I know you are a very busy person and cannot involve yourself in every problem.

I am not against nuclear power and do not like to cut down federal agencies, but you know yourself why you are trying to get America back on its feet. Your biggest enemy is in Washington, the bureaucracy, etc.

Now the problem is this: I worked at nuclear power plants since 1977. I was in supervision for several years. I have seen many safety violations which could be harmful to the public. I have also seen many supervisors with little or no experience. Some people have been to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and other federal agencies just to get criticized at the hearings. They get their diplomas and go home and get told that they are not blown away. I'm sure we know the danger involved in. I reported some of these violations to Brown & Root, the Company I worked for, and also to TUSCO (Texas Utilities Generating Company), the constructor and owner of the Comanche Peak nuclear plant. I have been threatened, warned of going to the press, and have been shot at.

I feel that we should be encouraged by federal agencies to report safety violations. I also feel that more care should be taken in the hiring of construction personnel; better qualified inspectors, etc.

I sure hope you are concerned. If I can be of any help, please contact me by mail at the address below.

Sincerely,

A. Dillingham, Jr.  
P.O. Box 124  
Glen Rose, Texas 76043

Arvill Dillingham, Jr.  
P. O. Box 124  
Glen Rose, Texas 76043

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RECEIVED  
ASST.

*Arvill Dillingham Jr.*

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Department of Energy  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Mr. Arvill Dillingham, Jr.  
Post Office Box 124  
Glen Rose, Texas 76043

Dear Mr. Dillingham:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 31, 1983, to President Reagan relative to safety problems at nuclear powerplants. On behalf of the President, permit me to provide additional viewpoints for your consideration.

As you know, oversight of the safety of commercial nuclear powerplants is primarily the responsibility of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Its coverage involves the siting, construction, operation, maintenance, and malfunction of such generating stations; its duties include licensing, inspection, enforcement, and continuing research and development directed toward improved safety for plantworkers and the public under all foreseeable conditions.

In its "Annual Report" for 1979, the Commission published the following statement:

Reporting Defects and Noncompliance

On June 6, 1977, the NRC published in the Federal Register a regulation (10 CFR Part 21) setting forth the requirements for implementing Section 206 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974. Individual directors or responsible officers of a firm involved in the nuclear industry are required to report noncompliance with NRC regulations or the existence of defects which could create a substantial health and safety hazard. Any such person who knowingly and consciously fails to provide the required reports to the NRC is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$5,000 for each failure and a total amount not to exceed \$25,000 within any 30-day period. The regulation became fully effective on January 6, 1978.

To further ensure quality of materials and workmanship in nuclear powerplants, the Commission stations resident inspectors onsite to monitor the output of engineers and contractors. Our records indicate that such inspectors were located at the Comanche Peak generating station during 1978 and 1979.

In a December 1981 address to an Atomic Energy Forum conference, however, the current Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Nunzio J. Palladino, recognized that there have been lapses in design analyses, in construction practices, and in other aspects of powerplant administration. He called upon the utility companies to examine their policies on quality control and to perform audits of their quality control measures to further ensure public safety and confidence in the industry.

Earlier that year, President Reagan had issued a statement endorsing nuclear power as "one of the best potential sources of new electrical energy supplies in the coming decades." In encouraging modification of the licensing and regulatory process, however, he recognized that any changes to be made must be "consistent with public health and safety."

To ensure that your concern for nuclear powerplant safety and your experience in that area are given appropriate visibility, I have forwarded a copy of your letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for their consideration.

Your willingness to speak out on the subject of nuclear power is appreciated, and you are encouraged to continue to express your views as future energy policy evolves.

Sincerely,

Victor L. Trebules, Jr.  
Acting Manager, External Affairs  
Division of Plans and Evaluation  
Office of Nuclear Energy

2 Enclosures

cc:  
William Dircks, NRC