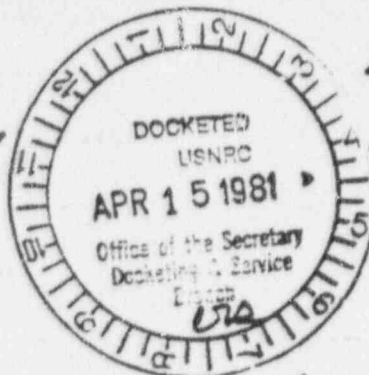


DOCKET NUMBER 50-354,355
PROD. & UTIL. FAC.

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Mr Joseph Hendrix, Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C.



2960 Hannah Ave
Norristown, Pa
19401

Dear Mr. Hendrix:

With great dismay, I read the enclosed article "Reactor's Cooling systems are flawed, NRC aide says."

Altho our Philadelphia Inquirer, from which the article was taken, is edited by a Edwin Guthman, who in a letter to me the other day admitted he was "afraid" of N-power generation, it's easy to see why he permitted the above scare headlined article to be published.

You are no doubt aware that there are a number of Society members who are borderline unstable. And it is quite clear when the N.R.C. (even an aide of ~~Sam~~) comes out with another "what-if" like the imminent corrosion of Nuclear reactor piping is present in at least 20 Nuclear plants, - well, it doesn't take much imagination to see how these unstable ones will react -

If Engineer* Rubins is anywhere correct, the N.R.C. has ignored this pipe corrosion for at least 20 years - and you can see what a bad light it puts the N.R.C.

On the other hand the Code of the ASME, which has been around for many more years by far than the N.R.C., (and probably knows much more about piping than your Aide Mr Rubins) is singled out for being stupid.

How can the N.R.C. afford to make public statements like this?

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My suggestion is to design a Nuclear power plant without any piping.

But then, if this were done, no doubt another one of your Aides would come up with another "Nuclear plants are unsafe because (another 'what if')".

I wonder how much piping a reactor built under the direction of the Naval Reactor Board has connected to it.

Perhaps Mr Rubin should tell them that their reactors are unsafe due to a "what if" a pipe might break:

Very truly yours
C. G. Bacon PE

NRC finds problem in reactors

Cites flaw in cooling systems

By Andrea Knox
Insurer Staff Writer

Two reactors at the Peach Bottom nuclear power plant in York County, Pa., and a reactor at the Oyster Creek nuclear plant in Ocean County, N.J., are among 23 identified by the staff of the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) as having a potentially dangerous flaw in the design of their primary cooling systems.

The flaw could permit an uncontrollable leak in the system that would first cause the reactor core to overheat and might subsequently flood the pumps that operate the emergency core-cooling system, according to Stuart Rubin, the NRC engineer who wrote the report.

"So unless you can isolate the (pipe) break in time, you will be threatening the safety systems upon which you rely to mitigate the accident," Rubin said in the report, which was released yesterday.

At the same time, Rubin said, the high radioactivity of the leaking water would prevent operators from getting into the reactor building to correct the problem.

The potential problem was identified in boiling-water reactors manufactured by General Electric Co.

No leak like the one postulated by the NRC has ever been detected in the 20 years that such reactors have been in operation in the United States and abroad.

While the report recommended that the reactors be allowed to continue operating, it also suggested that pipes in the affected system — called the scram discharge volume subsystem — be inspected as soon as possible to determine their integrity.

If any signs of cracks or corrosion are found, "there shouldn't be any question about closing a plant down," said Carole Michelson, head of the Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data, which prepared the report.

The report also recommended that the NRC and General Electric work together to design modifications that would make the system more reliable.

Reactors' cooling systems are flawed, NRC aide says

REACTORS, from 1-F

the NRC had not yet decided how to handle the problem.

The problem also affects two GE reactors ordered for PE's Limerick nuclear generating station and two GE reactors ordered for the Hope Creek station of Public Service Electric & Gas Co. in Salem County, N.J.

The scram system is used to drain water from the reactor core during a shutdown — whether planned or emergency — of the reactor.

The water is drained to make room for the control rods to be inserted in the reactor core.

Because the ability to shut down the reactor when necessary is crucial, the valves on the scram system were designed to fall in the open position so that water can continue to drain from the system, Rubin explained.

That is not a problem under normal conditions, he said, because the amount of water leaving the core is limited by the size of the holding tank into which it flows.

that if a pipe in the system should break water would continue to drain from the core indefinitely, leading to the twin problems of core overheating and flooding of emergency pumping equipment.

The report recommends that inspecting the pipes to detect any flaws be done as soon as possible as a first step in preventing such an accident.

Rubin said that the code of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, which is accepted by the NRC as the standard for most reactor piping, can be interpreted to say that pipes less than four inches in diameter — the size of those in the scram subsystem — need never be inspected over the life of the power plant.

"It is clear that many of the pipes (in this system) are not being looked at by anybody," Rubin said.

The report also recommended that new equipment be designed to improve the ability to detect pipe breaks in the system and to assure that the control valves close when

The finger of fate

A 'dangerous weapon'

Associated Press

What's the difference between pulling a holdup with a straight finger and a cocked gun?

Defendant Irby Butler says the difference is two years in jail. Judge Michael King says there is no difference.

King, of the Appellate Division of Superior Court, ruled against a reduced sentence yesterday for Butler, 23, of Asbury Park, N.J., who pleaded guilty to a charge of armed robbery.

Butler maintained that his 12-year term at Bordentown Youth Correctional Facility should be no more than 10 years, the penalty for robbery without a dangerous weapon.

Butler reasoned that he only held his hand in a coat pocket to simulate a pistol when he robbed a woman in a Monmouth County parking lot.

New Jersey's criminal code fails to spell out what is considered a deadly weapon.

Judge King ruled that concealing a hand formed to look like a gun was armed robbery because of the threat to the victim, who did not know whether there was a gun or not.

"The successful simulation of a gun so that the victim reasonably believed there was a gun is sufficient to support a conviction for aggravated or armed robbery," King ruled.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

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Edwin O. Guthman

Editor

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January 16, 1981

Mr. Conrad G. Bacon
2960 Hannah Avenue
Norristown, PA 19401

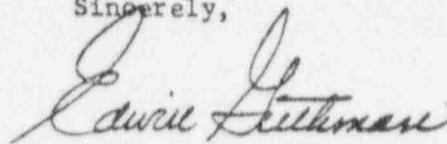
Dear Mr. Bacon:

Thank you for your letter concerning the editorial on acid rain. You make note of our position on nuclear power and the usage of coal and ask: "Which side are you on?"

Since the accident at Three Mile Island we at The Inquirer have not been convinced that nuclear power can ever be made safe. Thus, while it is a "clean" source of power in the sense of pollutants and particulate matter, the potential for tremendous environmental harm from radiation can never be eliminated, we believe. The usage of coal in the United States can be increased without harming the environment with the installation of scrubbers and other pollution control devices, accompanied by strict federal clean-air and mining regulations.

It is not a matter of choosing sides - nuclear versus unrestricted use of coal. Rather it is a matter of meeting the nation's energy needs while at the same time protecting the health and well-being of the American public and the country in which we live.

Sincerely,



Edwin Guthman

EG:pm