

March 15, 1972

PDR

NOTE TO FILES

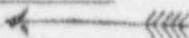
TELEPHONE CALL FROM G.E. RE MONTICELLO - REACTIVITY ANOMALY

As a result of a conversation between D. Knuth and Ivan Stuart of G.E. at the last ACRS meeting, a call was received by D. Knuth on March 9 from W. Gilbert of G.E. on the subject of critical rod position anomalies discussed in the letters of February 3 and February 29 from Monticello. I was a party to the telephone conversation. The primary question which had been raised by (but not discussed in) these letters was whether the higher than anticipated flux peaking in the water channels, which was indicated as being the cause of the more rapid burnout of the poison curtains, also implied greater power peaking in the edge fuel pins. G.E.'s (Gilbert's) answer to this was no. They said the flux peaking was not a surprise. They had known about it at the design stage and had used empirical corrections for the fuel power peaking, but not having empirical factors for the poison curtains they had increased the curtain boron loading, resulting in increased shutdown margin. Furthermore, they said the newer calculational models correctly accounted for gap peaking and that experimental gamma scans had confirmed the correctness of the calculations.

The subject of reactivity coefficients was not discussed during the phone call but subsequent to the call I read the Compliance February monthly report (and since determined that a more detailed individual Monticello report is not in as yet) and it indicates a much larger reactivity anomaly than had been implied by the Monticello letters. This would seem to indicate that the error in the reactivity coefficient was more important than had been implied by the letters.

Assuming G.E.'s answers are correct and they can calculate correctly now, at best all this once again demonstrate G.E.'s failure to communicate in timely fashion with us (or in this case apparently with Monticello) and points out the need for much more complete and detailed and up to date SARs.

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cc: D. Knuth, DRS

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