

MEMORANDUM FOR: Personal files - D. B. Matthews

SUBJECT: VOGTLE MEETINGS RE MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

This is to document a series of meetings at which my concerns regarding issues of management integrity and attitude at the Vogtle facility were presented and discussed. The genesis of these concerns is attitudes reflected by senior management (Assistant General Manager, General Manager, Vice President - Vogtle Project) at GPC dating back to pre-licensing activities for Unit 2. My involvement with the project stems from April 1988 to the present. As part of my responsibility for oversight of operational safety, I hold periodic meetings with GPC management on a rotating basis at each of the GPC sites, including SONOPCO headquarters in Birmingham. It was during one such of these meetings held at the Vogtle site on October 31, 1989, that I became alarmed at the attitude reflected by the General Manager towards open communication with the NRC and the apparent disdain for regulatory involvement with ongoing plant activities or problem resolution. This was very similar to the attitudes reflected during an enforcement conference held in early 1989 to discuss an event that occurred during Unit 2 hot functional testing involving operator errors. A subsequent meeting on this issue with GPC upper management was required in order to address lingering concerns on the part of myself and the Regional staff regarding the effectiveness of the corrective actions. This meeting was held prior to the staff's recommending that the Commission authorize full power operations at Unit 2.

On April 4, 1990, I attended a briefing by OI on the preliminary findings of their investigation of an allegation directed towards the Assistant General Manager at Vogtle relating to actions taken by him in his capacity as Operations Manager in 1988. The allegation extended to the issue of overall operating philosophy of plant management.

On April 9, 1990, I participated in a meeting with GPC personnel in the RII offices to discuss actions taken by GPC to address the March 20 event that involved a station blackout and resulted in the declaration of a site area emergency. During this meeting I saw instances of the General Manager being non-responsive to NRC questions and a reflection of the disdainful attitude towards NRC involvement that I had seen on previous occasions. I raised this point in the subsequent discussion held among the NRC personnel. Gus Laines and Steve Varga of NRR were both in attendance. The remainder of the personnel were with Region II. At that time the collective decision of the staff was that Unit 1 should be permitted to restart. Based on my perception that no technical problems stemming from the event remained to be addressed by GPC, I supported this decision.

On Wednesday, April 11, I began reviewing all of the information that had come to my attention over the previous months in

connection with events at Vogtle and my personal experience as the Project Director. I reached a conclusion that the overall management attitude reflected in the preceding events was one that did not reflect an appropriate safety consciousness and could lead to non-conservative decisions in response to off-normal events at Vogtle. I immediately shared my views with Lainas and Varga; and we briefed Jim Partlow later that day. Representatives of the IIT that were investigating the March 20 event participated in this briefing by phone. The meeting resulted in a decision to discuss my reservations about Unit 1 restart with Region II at 7:45 the next morning (April 12). Members of the OI staff participated in the April 12 meeting. The conclusion reached by Stu Ebner was that he saw no reason to delay restart of Unit 1. I did not concur in that decision and asked him to delay informing the utility until I had an opportunity to discuss my concerns with Jim Taylor. He agreed and Jim Partlow accompanied me to the EDO's office to meet with Mr. Taylor.

SUBJ: CONTACT WITH BRIAN LEVINE, ATTORNEY, TROUTMAN SANDERS

ON AUGUST 26, 1993, AT APPROXIMATELY 1630, I RETURNED BRIAN LEVINE'S TELEPHONE CALL AND HE RELATED THE FOLLOWING: HE WOULD LIKE TO SIT DOWN AND SET A TIME TO MEET. HE IS AFRAID HE WILL MISS THE POINT, HE NEEDS SPECIFIC ISSUES ROBINSON IS CONCERNED ABOUT. HE NEEDS GUIDANCE. I STATED TO LEVINE THAT THE NRC MAY TAKE THE "YOU TALK WE LISTEN" POSITION, WITHOUT ANY AGENDA, AND IF SO, WHAT WILL HE DO? LEVINE STATED HE WILL CHECK WITH HIGHER AUTHORITY, BUT HIS PERSONAL POSITION WOULD BE THAT HE WOULD GIVE THE PRESENTATION ANYWAY, AND GIVE IT HIS BEST SHOT. LEVINE REITERATED THAT HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT MISSING THE POINT, HE WANTS TO MAKE SURE THE NRC PROBLEMS WITH THIS ISSUE ARE COVERED IN HIS PRESENTATION. HE ALSO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN MOVING THIS THING ALONG. HE ASKED THAT WE RECONTACT EARLY NEXT WEEK. I AGREED TO TO SO.

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