

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives • Washington, DC 20515

October 29, 1985

Mr. Carlton Kammerer
Director, Office of Congressional Affairs
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20555

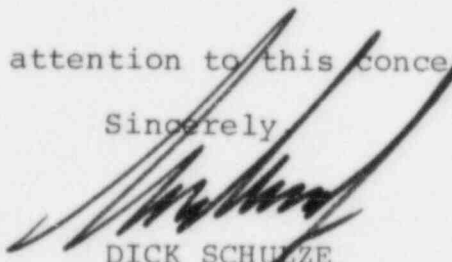
Dear Mr. Kammerer:

Enclosed please find correspondence which I have received from my constituent, Mr. Robert G. Dobson, of Kimberton, Pennsylvania, concerning the "incident" at the Limerick plant last August 1st.

I would appreciate your reviewing the points raised and giving me a report of your findings on this matter.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this concern.

Sincerely,



DICK SCHULZE
Member of Congress

enclosure

RTS:mt

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PLEASE RESPOND TO:

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OCT 23 1985

Robert G. Dobson, Jr.
East Seven Stars Road
Post Office Box 541
Kimberton, PA. 19442

October 14, 1985 OCT 23 1985

Dear Representative Schulze,

Enclosed is a copy of an article which appeared in "The Evening Phoenix" on October 4, 1985 in reference to the Limerick Nuclear Generating Station. I think there should be a full scale investigation, at the state and federal level, into why they had this leak of reactor coolant, and why the public was never told about it until two months later. The manner in which this happened does not reinforce Philadelphia Electric Company claims that they can safely operate the plant. I am outraged that PE does not consider public safety, only profits for stockholders.

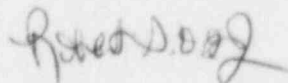
I am disturbed that the plant is allowed to continue to operate, even though this contaminated coolant has not been completely cleaned up. I understand now (by way of another newspaper article) that the coolant which is in the reactor (which should be stabilized, extremely pure water), has particles of metals floating in it. This would cause excessive radiation to be picked up in the cooling system and possibly transferred outside the plant and into the environment, not to mention more radioactive junk.

I do not believe the Nuclear Regulatory Commission cares about the public, only about promoting nuclear power. If I were a regulator, and an organization I regulated attempted to cover up something, there would be a full scale investigation, fines, and possibly even revoking their license for a period of time. In the nuclear power industry, there is blatant disregard for human and environmental safety, because no matter what happens, a licensee never loses a license, and they rarely even get a fine.

In closing, I would like to say that I am tired of hearing how "safe" (I don't believe a word of it) nuclear power is. I think something should be done to control what is rapidly becoming an uncontrolled industry. I would appreciate hearing your views on this matter. Thank you very much for your time, and I will look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Dobson, Jr.



PE sued over nuke accident at Limerick

Radioactive water leaked

By MARIANNA HASSRICK
Staff Writer

NORRISTOWN — An Elverson woman has filed suit against Philadelphia Electric Co. (PE), alleging she was injured during the cleanup of thousands of gallons of radioactive water that leaked at the utility's Limerick nuclear power plant last month.

Negligence by the PE personnel resulted in permanent weakness to the pre-existing back ailment of Miriam Dolan, an employee of Bechtel Power Corp, the suit alleges.

The suit, filed Wednesday in Montgomery County Court, says PE personnel were trying to "clean up the contaminated reactor Unit 2 as soon as possible since representatives of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) were coming in."

According to NRC spokesman Karl Abraham, the accident occurred on Aug. 1 and was discovered on Aug. 2. He said the NRC office in King of Prussia was informed on Aug. 2. A security guard discovered about a half-inch of water in the pit of the unfinished Unit 2 building. By the following day, the water had stabilized at about the 18-inch level.

A faulty three-quarter-inch hand valve had allowed between 10,000 and 20,000 gallons of water containing low levels of radiation from Unit 1 to leak into the pit of Unit 2.

Abraham said the water did not present a hazard since it contained only 4 percent of the radiation permitted by the NRC.

"It was a rather inconsequential happening," Abraham said this morning. "Our office sent an inspector to the plant on Aug. 6. His report is being typed and will be included in the monthly report which should be ready shortly."

Abraham added that PE was not required to submit a license event report (LER) because the water was confined to the plant.

PE RESPONSE

PE spokesman Ron Harper said this morning that the leak went unreported, except for a "courtesy" call to the NRC, because it did not present a danger to plant employees or the environment outside the plant.

He said the water that leaked had circulated through the Unit 1 reactor, but was contaminated at low levels because the reactor had been operating at less than 5 percent of full power.

"No public report of the Aug. 1 incident was required or warranted since the water was confined to the plant and was only 4 percent of limits allowed by the NRC," he said.

Harper emphasized that the incident had not been concealed deliberately.

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• Limerick

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"I am very sensitive to this sort of thing," he said, adding that the spilled reactor water has been pumped back into the reactor cooling system.

DOLAN LAWSUIT

According to court documents, Dolan was part of a "rad-waste" group at the time of the Aug. 1 accident, which required her to fit respiratory equipment to be used in entering contaminated areas.

She charges that when she reported to work on Aug. 6, she periodically checked to see if workers involved in the cleanup needed protective clothing. A PE employee supervising the cleanup directed Dolan to remove a scaffold and pulley that had been set up to remove the contaminated water.

The suit states that Dolan was required to remove the scaffolding

at the threat of loss of her job, even though she had an existing back condition and was physically unable to do this type of work. She contends that she aggravated her back condition when she had to stretch out to remove a pulley suspended at the end of a wooden platform.

Dolan contends that the equipment was heavier than she could handle and this was well-known to her employer and included in her medical records. According to her suit, she was not given any assistance by PE personnel, although they had begun the equipment removal to avoid a "confrontation with NRC personnel."

Because of her injury, Dolan has been unable to return to work. She is suing PE for in excess of \$20,000 in damages. Her husband, John, is suing for in excess of \$20,000 also, claiming the loss of consortium of his wife and medical expenses he has incurred on her behalf.