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United States Senate

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

(CREATED PURSUANT TO S. RES. 8, 91ST CONGRESS)

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

February 23, 1977

Congressional Liaison
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

REGARDING ATTACHED LETTER FROM:

Ms. Kathi Schulze
341 Apricot Street
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54494

Dear Sir:

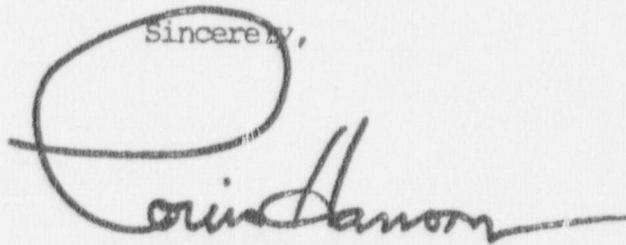
Attached is a letter recently received in this office. Please provide us with a report on this matter at your earliest convenience and return the correspondence to Senator Nelson.

PLEASE MARK THE ENVELOPE TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Pat Harkins

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this regard.

Sincerely,



LOUIS HANSON
Administrative Assistant
to Senator Nelson

LH:
enclosure(s)

8708030151 870721
PDR FOIA
CONNOR87-214 PDR

3/7/77
8:30

February 2, 1977

Dear Mr. Nelson,

Enclosed is the article which prompted this letter to you.

Disheartening is the message, for many reasons (some of which I have underlined), as is the entire issue of the continuing of the funding for and construction of nuclear power plants.

The hope is that this particular plant near Diablo Canyon may not be opened, that it may not receive the NRC's operating license. The hope is that you and other politicians will be able to act in this matter, that you will take seriously the real dangers that it presents, and, that in spite of the money, effort, and the "politics" that have been invested in the plant, you will choose to act in such a way that will truly protect the public safety - act so as not to allow the plant to be opened.

Another hope is that you will be able to encourage more research and development in the areas of solar, wind, and geo-thermal energy, as substitutes for further development and use of nuclear power.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Very sincerely,

Ruth Schulte

P.S. I wish you the best in your work in the new Administration.

I'm also sending this letter to Mr. William Proxmire, Mr. Obey, and President Carter.

Nuclear reactor, built on quake fault

By Jack Anderson

WASHINGTON — It started in the quiet darkness before dawn. Two small leaks, seemingly insignificant, trickled down the canyon wall near the north end of the great earth-filled Teton Dam.

But three minutes before noon on the last day of Sunday, June 5, 1976, the 30-story dam split open, and a massive wall of water poured over the peaceful Idaho countryside, slaughtering only 14 people died from the flood's ravages. But over a billion dollars worth of Idaho real estate was washed away. Aqueducts were left homeless.

Subsequent investigations indicated that the dam should not have been built at all. For a billion gallons of water backed up behind the dam, that it was a risky project. The geology was tricky, the engineering dubious. It unfortunately, Washington was more sensitive to the lobbying for the dam than to the scientific warnings against it. And so the government built a monster called Teton.

Now a worse disaster may be in the making on the California coast. A nuclear power plant is nearing completion near Diablo Canyon, just three miles from an earthquake zone called Hosgri Fault.

The Hosgri Fault hadn't been discovered when the government issued the construction permit in 1968. But several eminent geologists warned that more care should be taken to locate possible faults in that remote, remote area.

All Oil geologists announced the Hosgri Fault. They found it. Politicians have backed it, that there is no, ironically, that the tremendous pressure to open it. Allison said

Jack Anderson merry-go-round

Nuclear facility's critics had unsuccessfully urged the government to try.

Yet despite the earthquake danger, the government went ahead with the Diablo Canyon plant. It doesn't take a geologist to figure out that an earthquake could rupture the nuclear power plant. This could cause a radiation spill, with catastrophic consequences.

The construction of the plant could have been stopped in 1971, of course, before the full \$1.2 billion it cost to build it was spent. Now it is too late to recover the enormous construction cost; the plant will soon be ready to open.

However, it still requires an operating license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which is supposed to protect the public safety.

The NRC is toughening its standards to make the Diablo Canyon plant more earthquake resistant. But no human engineering could guarantee the safety of a plant on the edge of an earthquake fault.

The NRC's project manager for the plant, Dennis Allison, told us that the commission's proposed safety regulations give some comfort, but not much. He acknowledged that the site "turned out to be just such a great place."

Yet so much money and effort has been invested in the plant, and so many powerful politicians have backed it, that there is tremendous pressure to open it. Allison said

the operating license "probably" would be granted.

It was also the site, according to congressional findings, that doomed the Teton Dam. But the politicians who promoted the dam and the bureaucrats who planned it have not been held accountable for the billion-dollar disaster. The Bureau of Reclamation, whose mismanagement helped to produce the catastrophe, has been left unscathed.

Congress, of course, conducted its usual investigations, but these didn't perturb Reclamation Commissioner Gil Stamm. He told some bureaucrats, as we reported last year, that he "wasn't losing any sleep at night" over the congressional inquiries.

Now we have discovered additional evidence of his apparent nonchalance over the dam disaster. At obscure House hearings, Stamm pooh-poohed the casualty count, which had then reached only 11. "The total number of deaths is 11, three of which were gunshot wounds, two were suicides, one is a couple of days after the loss of the dam, the other two weeks after the loss." He reported blandly to the Water and Power subcommittee.

There have been a number of heart attacks. I think the drownings were a total of five, two of whom were a couple of 76 and 78 years of age who were warned by relatives in ample time but refused to leave their home. Some time later, when they saw the water rising, they did choose to leave, but it was too late. They were drowned.

It is true that the warnings reached most Idaho residents in time for them to escape the flood. For this, the dam builders deserve no credit; thousands might have been drown-

ed. Stamm assured us that he and his staff are "extremely sensitive" to the disaster. But if sterner measures are taken against the responsible the NRC might be a little less wary of an operating permit to a nuclear rim of an earthquake fault.