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DATE
June 26, 1968

DOUGLAS / UNITED NUCLEAR, INC.

TITLE

KW REACTOR INCIDENT

E. T. Murphy

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DISTRIBUTION:

DATE June 26, 1968
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FROM
E. T. Murphy
Specialist-Communications & Community
Relations
SUBJECT KW REACTOR INCIDENT

The following information about the incident last week at KW Reactor may be disseminated orally to employees in your organization. As you can see, the information is classified; thus, this technique is necessary if we are to release accurate, up-to-date information about the incident to employees.

Flow to a single process tube in KW Reactor was shut off late last Wednesday night when a foreign object lodged in the venturi inlet. The reactor was immediately scrambled.

The salient facts about the situation are as follows:

1. The incident occurred approximately 19 hours after start-up.
2. The fuel elements in that tube had just been charged.
3. The release of contamination was minor--less than occurs during a "normal" fuel rupture.
4. There is evidence of fuel jacket melting in the tube. There is no evidence to date that the process tube itself was melted through.
5. The flow of water to the process tube is still blocked. However, the reactor has been shut down long enough so that no heat is being generated.
6. The problem now is to remove the fuel elements from the tube or to remove the elements and the tube together.
7. As of Tuesday morning all downstream dummies and three downstream fuel elements have been removed.
8. The two remaining hazards that must be dealt with are the danger of uranium fire in the tube and the possible release of radioactivity to the building.
9. A high-level managerial and technical task force has been created to help expedite the safe removal of the damaged fuel elements and the restoration of KW Reactor to service.

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