

Nuclear Information and Resource Service

1424 16th St., NW, Suite 404, Washington, DC 20036; 202-328-0002; fax: 202-462-2183; e-mail: nirsne@igc.apc.org web:www.nirs.org

Office of General Counsel
GC-52
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

January 30, 1998

Counsel:

Public Comment on Notice of Inquiry Concerning Preparation of Report to Congress on the Price Anderson Act.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this fundamental issue. Please include Nuclear Information and Resource Service, and the address given above on any distribution lists for the development and draft of your report.

On behalf of our members in all 50 states, our comment is this: the Price Anderson Act should be rescinded. It is not appropriate for the taxpayers in the person of the federal government to take the burden of liability for a commercial, private corporate activity. It is not appropriate for the liability of a life-threatening activity - nuclear fission - to be capped in such a way that individuals and communities must bear the ultimate cost. It is unfair protectionism for nuclear power to enjoy this shielding of their cost of doing business. A recent reanalysis of the Three Mile Island accident by Wing, et al, as well as abundant data from the aftermath of Chernobyl should be used in your report to examine the true costs to society of nuclear reactor accidents, and the evidence that they do in fact, occur.

Further, it is destructive to the goals and objectives of nuclear waste management - isolation from the environment and prevention of radiation exposure of both workers and the public - to indemnify Department of Energy Contractors. It would be instructive to include in your report an estimate of the costs created in the implementation of Department programs by contractor-related events. We would particularly like to see an analysis of the likely costs of indemnification of contractor for nuclear waste transportation and any nuclear waste accidents that are covered under Price Anderson now, and those projected for the high-level waste program.

Sincerely,

Mary Olson
Nuclear Waste Project