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NATURAL RESOURCES

The Honorable Dale E. Klein  
Chairman  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
11555 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD, 20852

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
7TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-2107

May 16, 2007

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Dear Chairman Klein:

I am writing regarding an article that appeared in the June edition of Esquire.<sup>1</sup> This article indicates that the former security manager at the Palisades nuclear plant in Covert, Michigan is an individual who evidently fabricated much of his background, yet somehow managed to obtain both a job as a security manager of a nuclear power plant and the necessary security clearances. It is also my understanding that at some point prior to his employment at the Palisades reactor, he also worked at the Seabrook nuclear power plant, which is located in New Hampshire, not far from my Congressional district, and that it was at the Seabrook facility where he initially received clearance to have unescorted access to nuclear reactors. If the information contained in this article is true, then there would appear to be serious shortcomings associated with nuclear reactor licensees' clearance process – or perhaps with the process used by the Federal Government itself.

The article provides an extensive examination of the various claims by an individual named William E. Clark, who began his job as the head of security at the Palisades nuclear plant in early 2006 and resigned several weeks ago, before the article was published. Specifically, Mr. Clark evidently claimed, both to the author of the article and others, that:

- He killed people in Viet Nam, New Orleans and Iraq, and had been employed as a marksman for Blackwater Corporation.
- He had been part of the guard force charged with protecting Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan and Paul Bremer in Iraq.
- He had Q level clearance with the Department of Energy (a claim which is reportedly true) and a Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information clearance with the Department of Defense (a claim which is reportedly not true).
- He had been in the French Foreign Legion.
- He had made up some of the above claims because in fact he was a covert operator employed by the Federal Government through a “handler,” and his identity needed to be kept secret.

Clearly, if someone was able to obtain a job at a nuclear plant using a falsified resume

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.esquire.com/features/mercenary0607>

and claiming security clearances that he never obtained, there would appear to be a problem with the process NRC licensees use to evaluate prospective employees. While Mr. Clark has reportedly resigned his position, I am concerned about what this incident portends for the adequacy of the process for vetting and granting clearances to *other* individuals employed at nuclear reactors. Consequently, I ask for your prompt assistance in responding to the following questions:

- 1) On what date did the Commission first become aware of the possibility that Mr. Clark had fabricated portions of his resume? Who informed the Commission?
- 2) On what date did the licensee, Entergy, become aware of this? How did the licensee find out?
- 3) Mr. Clark has reportedly resigned. Has the Commission or the licensee considered the possibility that he may pose a danger to the facility, or to other nuclear facilities, since he now possesses sensitive information regarding the operation of nuclear power plants and any security weaknesses? If so, what is the Commission and/or the licensee doing to ensure that he cannot gain armed or unarmed access to a nuclear power plant? Have other licensees been informed about this situation, and if so, please provide all documentation.
- 4) According to the article, a company named Nuclear Security Services Corporation reportedly assisted Mr. Clark in identifying and obtaining the position at the Palisades reactor. Has the Commission determined whether this corporation and the individuals running it are themselves adequately and accurately qualified and credentialed for these purposes? If not, do you plan to do so, since this company may have – knowingly or unknowingly – aided Mr. Clark in obtaining a position for which he was presenting false credentials? How many other individuals have been placed at nuclear reactors by this company?
- 5) Mr. Clark reportedly claimed to his employer that he had been a paid assassin, although it appears that this claim was not in fact true. Can the Commission account for how someone making such a claim, true or not, could be considered eligible for employment at nuclear power plants? Please fully justify your response.
- 6) Please fully describe the process by which applicants for sensitive positions at nuclear reactors are screened. What background checks are required? How are claims made on resumes verified?
- 7) Please provide a copy of Mr. Clark's resume. Which claims were verified by licensee or Government personnel?
- 8) What steps have you taken to verify the specific allegations made in the Esquire article? What have you learned?
- 9) When did Mr. Clark work at the Seabrook nuclear power plant, and in what capacity? Did he work for any other nuclear power plants, and if so which, and during what time period? For Seabrook and any additional nuclear power plant at which he worked, please describe a) the manner in which his credentials were examined and/or verified by licensee personnel, including whether he made similar claims on his resume or in interactions with licensee employees as are described in the Esquire article, b) the circumstances surrounding Mr. Clark's termination or separation from the power plant, and c) whether, if the circumstances were unusual, the licensee reported them to the Commission (and if so, what actions the Commission took in response to receiving the information).

10) If you've concluded that any of the claims in the article regarding Mr. Clark's various false representations are correct, or if Mr. Clark engaged in similar behavior at Seabrook or other nuclear power plants, a) why exactly did licensee and/or government personnel fail to discover these representations, b) what steps (and on what timeline) is the Commission taking to ensure that any systemic flaws in the clearance process are remedied c) what steps is the Commission taking to hold individuals or the licensee accountable for any failures to follow steps in the clearance process and d) if systemic flaws in the clearance process have been identified, what steps are you taking to require that all background and security checks required of all current licensee employees are redone?

Thank you very much for your attention to this important matter. Please provide your response no later than Friday June 15, 2007. If you have any questions or concerns, please have your staff contact Dr. Michal Freedhoff or Mr. Will Huntington of my staff at 202-225-2836.

Sincerely,

  
Edward J. Markey