



NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP, INC.

9 Murray Street • N.Y., N.Y. 10007 • (212) 349-6460

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April 20, 1987

Mr. Steven A. Varga
Director, Project Directorate #3
Division of PWR Licensing-A
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Varga:

It has recently come to my attention that Consolidated Edison, operator of Indian Point Unit II, has applied for an extension of the expiration date of the unit's license from October 14, 2006 to September 28, 2013. Further, it appears that the NRC has decided that issuance of this extension would result in "no significant impact." According to the Federal Register notice of April 9, 1987 (Vol. 52, No. 68, p. 11577) NRC "staff concluded that there are no significant radiological or nonradiological impacts associated with the proposed action and that the proposed license amendment will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment."

I beg to differ. As you know, it is my belief that Indian Point poses a significant threat to the quality of the human environment every day it is permitted to operate. Furthermore, that impact exists whether or not there is ever a major accident at Indian Point, because of (a) routine radiation emissions from the plant; (b) storage of high-level irradiated (spent) fuel on site which will pose a threat to the environment around the plant as long as it remains on site or if it is transported through the densely populated New York metropolitan region on its way to a permanent federal repository in the future; and (c) the ultimate problems of decommissioning and decontamination of the site, which becomes more radioactive with each additional period of operation. How you can call all this no significant impact is beyond me. Such a determination is only possible because the regulatory world of the NRC operates under a set of premises shared by the nuclear industry but not the man and woman on the street—or more precisely in those communities around nuclear plants. Our reality is different from yours. To us, the operation of a nuclear power plant 25 miles north of New York City, in the nation's most densely populated region has a potential impact on life and health greater than anything the area confronts—aside from a possible nuclear war. Only NRC's blind obeisance to the wishes of the nuclear industry allows it to say otherwise.

But, I have learned through years of attempting to deal rationally with the NRC, that argument on the above with the NRC is pointless. And I would like, instead, to address two simple straightforward questions to you:

1. Why must you issue this extension now instead of later, when the current expiration date approaches and you can make a timely determination of the actual condition of the plant, etc. at that point? (That seems far more sensible than...

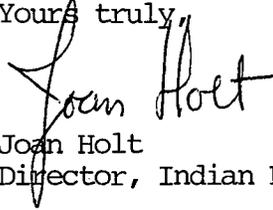
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saying today that Indian Point II will pose no significant impact twenty years from now.)

2. Are there any recourses available to the public for blocking this untimely license extension?

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Holt". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Joan Holt
Director, Indian Point Project

cc: Governor Mario Cuomo
Congressman Benjamin Gilman
Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr.
Senator Daniel P. Moynihan
Senator Alfonse D'Amato