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ADDRESSEE: Gregory Jaczko

SUBJECT: Nuclear power as a source of energy

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Jan. 6, 2011

Gregory Jaczko, Chairman  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop-0-16G4  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001  
Dear Chairman Jaczko,

The growing energy crisis must force us to look anew at many traditional sources of energy. Perhaps one of the most vulnerable is the nuclear power industry, at least in this country which has not built a nuclear power plant in over 20 years, despite the fact that nuclear energy is far safer than either coal or oil. As far as I can determine, it has only killed 7 people in the past 50 years compared to hundreds in oil and thousands in coal. (Three at Idaho Falls in 1961 and four at Surry Power Station in 1986). In addition, newer cleaner technology has not been put into practice in the U.S., even though it is widely used in the rest of the world. Doesn't that give you some concern for the country that invented the nuclear power plant?

Why do we separate the nuclear arms industry completely from the nuclear power industry? They are intimately related. They are also each subject to ossified thinking. Why isn't there a massive program to rework nuclear warheads to nuclear fuel for the world's 400 nuclear power plants? Why do we ignore Thorium, which is better for nuclear power plants, although useless in nuclear warheads? Why don't we make an effort to utilize the massive radioactive waste which can often be used in other industries which make use of various radiation sources? Why don't we dilute our nuclear waste with the spent uranium ores from which their precursors came and return them to their source with some trees as a mine reclamation project? Why don't we build smaller safer nuclear power plants in hundreds of communities instead of massive giants that must send their power hundreds of miles to users that may indeed have better sources of power? Europe and Asia are far ahead of us in each of these plans. What is the Nuclear Regulatory Commission doing about that failure?

I am not a nuclear scientist, but I am disturbed by our lack of attention to a huge energy source that could create jobs and energy for a nation that desperately needs both. Isn't that what the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is all about? We are afraid of change, but we need change. Isn't the task of the Regulatory Commission to bring about safely the changes imposed upon us by our advancing world?

  
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