STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor

SEISMIC SAFETY COMMISSION
1900 K STREET, SUITE 100
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
(916) 322-4917

Robert A. Olson,
Executive Director

October 28, 1981

Mr. Nunzio J. Palladino
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Palladino:

The recent series of articles in the statewide press regarding earthquake safety of the two nuclear reactors and appurtenant equipment at Diablo Canyon has caused concern among members of the California Seismic Safety Commission. The Commission specifically discussed this item at its meeting on October 8th, and it directed letters of inquiry be sent to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Nuclear Regulatory Commission and John A. Blume and Associates. This concern stems not only from the uncertainty of whether the reactor and equipment can withstand the projected earthquake forces, but also from what appears to be a breakdown in the process for providing an independent review of plans and on-site inspection during construction.

In 1977, at the request of members of the California Legislature, the Seismic Safety Commission reviewed the history of the siting of the Diablo Canyon plant, including what had transpired to that time and the status of the process of "independent" review. The report to the Legislature concluded that "given the state-of-the-art, the acquisition of new knowledge, and the need for expert judgement, the process (of review for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear site) is about as complete as it could be." It appears now, that perhaps this conclusion is no longer valid.

The Commission has established policy in its report on "Goals and Policies for Earthquake Safety in California" which states that "all new critical facilities ... should be subject to thorough and independent review and inspection of design and construction." We recognize that review was taking place at Diablo Canyon; it also appears that such review broke down in several important instances. Therefore, the Commission would like your answers to the following:

1. Do you believe the process of independent review set up for Diablo Canyon was truly independent as delineated by Seismic Safety Commission policy for independent review (enclosed)?

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2. Since errors apparently arose, where in the process do you believe the weaknesses existed which allowed for such errors?

3. What, if any, steps have you taken thus far to correct the problems in your review process which would be applied to other facilities?

The Commission recognizes that the building of nuclear reactors is a very complex process. However, that complexity should not be confused by the overall need for an independent review of design and construction. It is a sound principle, and if carried out correctly, should provide a proper outcome.

I have enclosed a copy of the Commission's Report on Independent Review for your information. The Commission looks forward to your response.

Sincerely,

George G. Mader

GEORGE G. MADER
Chairman

Enclosure (SSC 81-01)

81-2476
No. ~~XXXXXXXXX~~ 80-2777 Logging Date 12/15/81

NRC SECRETARIAT

TO:
- ☐ Commissioner _____ Date _____
- XXXX Exec. Dir./Oper.
- ☐ Cong. Liaison
- ☐ Public Affairs
- ☐ _____
- ☐ Gen. Counsel
- ☐ Solicitor
- ☐ Secretary
- ☐ Inspector & Auditor
- ☐ Policy Evaluation

Incoming: Stanley Schtt
From: Seismic Safety Commission

To: Palladino Date 12/11/81
Subject: follow-up ltr to his 10/28 ltr concerning seismic problems at Diablo Canyon

☐ Prepare reply for signature of:
- ☐ Chairman
- ☐ Commissioner _____
- ☐ EDO, GC, CL, SOL, PA, SECY, IA, PE
- ☐ Signature block omitted
- ☐ _____
- ☐ Return original of incoming with response

~~XXX~~ For direct reply* Suspense: ~~Jan~~ 4
XXX For appropriate action
☐ For information

Rec'd Off. EDO
Date 12/16/81
Time 2:00 p

(see SECY-81-2273)

Remarks: docket, RF

For the Commission: billie

*Send three (3) copies of reply to Secy Correspondence and Records Branch

NRC-62 ACTION SLIP

Ref. EDO 11044
Denton
Cys: Dircks
Cornell
Rehm
Stello
DeYoung
Kerr, SP
Shapar

The 10/28/81 ltr fm Mader is circulating for Commission approval. The SECY will reference Scott's letter when the final is sent by Chairman.