

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

18 JAN 1980

MEMORANDUM:

The attached letter(s) addressed to the President is referred to your office for suitable acknowledgment or other appropriate handling at the earliest opportunity. Should you receive mail that has been misdirected, please forward to the appropriate agency. I would also appreciate knowing when you are forwarding such mail. My phone number is 456-2717.

Thank you.



Mary Martha Seal
Director
Correspondence Agency Liaison

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January 14, 1980

Dear Mr. Strong:

I have been asked to acknowledge your message to President Carter. He regrets that the large volume of mail denies him the pleasure of a personal reply.

The President welcomes the opinions of the American people. He appreciates the concern which prompted your letter, as well as the time and effort you have taken to bring your views on the Skagit Nuclear Plant to his attention.

Your comments have been noted, and we are sharing them with the appropriate officials at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

President Carter thanks you for writing and sends you his best wishes.

Sincerely,

Daniel M. Chew
Director of
Presidential Correspondence

Mr. David B. Strong
701 Fairhaven Avenue
Burlington, WA 98233

DC:LEP:ALT:pht

cc: NRC



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DAVID B. STRONG

ATTORNEY AT LAW

TELEPHONE
(206) 755-0841

701 FAIRHAVEN AVENUE
BURLINGTON, WASHINGTON 98233

act
RECEIVED
NOV 29 1979
MAIL PROCESSING

President James Earl Carter
The Whitehouse
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: A matter of national security: Unnecessary delays...
in construction of the Skagit Nuclear Plant

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing this letter as a private citizen. I do not represent any party having an interest in the subject matter of this letter, nor do I own any stock in Puget Sound Power and Light Company. I have been a supporter of Puget Sound Power and Light Company's application for authority to construct the proposed Skagit nuclear power plant at Bacus Hill near Sedro Woolley, Washington, for more than five years. I am also a Commander in the United States Naval Reserve. I set these matters forth only that you may weigh somewhat my comments contained herein.

I have noted with interest and concern the development of recent events in Iran and throughout the Middle East. I believe that you have acted in a most responsible manner to preserve the honor, integrity, and best interests of the United States and its citizens presently being held hostage in Tehran. More than any other event of your presidency, this matter has coalesced the opinion of the American people and drawn them together in a common feeling of national unity. You have great support for your handling of this difficult and trying situation. I am sure everyone in the country hopes that you will bring it to a successful conclusion.

Unfortunately, I believe you made a point to the American people in your prepared statement at the press conference televised nationally on November 28, 1979 which was overlooked by many. The point of which I speak is that it is against



President James Earl Carter
November 29, 1979
page 2

our national security to be dependent upon other nations for our supply of oil and energy.... You urged the development of alternatives in this country to get us out of this dependent reliance on events in the volatile Middle East. Even more unfortunately, we have a situation here in the Pacific Northwest which is developing in a manner directly contrary to your plea for alternative energy sources and improvement of our national security. I believe that only you, through the exercise of your executive powers, can avert further delays in escalation of costs and, indeed, possible loss entirely of the project.

By way of background, you should understand that Puget Sound Power and Light Company initiated planning for construction of a nuclear power plant at Bacus Hill near Sedro Woolley in Skagit County more than five years ago. After going through an extensive series of public hearings, the Skagit County Commissioners granted a conditional rezone of the property from rural and/or forestry uses to commercial. A contract was entered into between the county and Puget Power which provided in part that the rezoning would only be effective for a period of five years. If Puget Power failed to commence construction within the five year period, the rezoning would terminate and the property would revert to its original zoning. The contract will expire December 31, 1979. The company must be granted a limited work permit by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission allowing it to commence work on the site prior to that date and in sufficient time to allow the company to actually get onto the site with bulldozers, etc. and start the work. This has been delayed time and again by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on several grounds. The most recent was a reversal, within the period of three weeks, of position concerning whether or not additional geological studies were required. I, at this point, will not attempt to set forth the technical details. I leave that to Puget Power and others more qualified than I. The substance, however, is that, I believe, a further delay has been ordered by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission which will take the hearings well beyond the December 31, 1979 deadline. Further, the moratorium announced by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on licensing of new plants has extended licensing of the plant well beyond December 31, 1979.

At the general election held on November 6, 1979, the voters of Skagit County considered an advisory ballot submitted to them by the present county commissioners (the make up of the board



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November 29, 1979
page 3

having changed during the last five years). More than seventy (70%) percent of the voters voted against extension of the contract rezone. Thereafter, the county planning commission and the county commissioners held hearings on whether or not to allow a six month rezone contract extension originally requested by Puget Power, and denied the extension. On December 17, 1979, the county planning commission will hold a further public hearing to consider a three year contract extension previously submitted by Puget Power as well. There is no reason to believe that the county will act favorably with regard to the extension at that hearing. I enclose herewith a copy of a newspaper article which appeared in the Skagit Valley Herald on November 28, 1979 concerning the current status of the situation.

The incident at Three-Mile Island scared a very great many of the voters. I believe that Puget Power did its best to educate them on the real efforts which have been made by the company to design the plant safely. Again, there are many technical points which may be addressed by others more expert than I. Suffice it to say that I believe the plant would be quite safe and that the present concerns with regard to geology, and nuclear waste disposal have been or will be adequately dealt with by the company and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

I believe the issue of whether the Skagit Nuclear Plant should be built is one which cannot be left to the decision of local authorities any longer and that the citizens of Skagit County who voted against the plant were reacting with undue concern. There is not just a little of the "no-growth" philosophy underlying the anti-nuclear movement here in Skagit County. In this situation only the federal government can effectively act to get the plant built.

The Skagit Nuclear Plant is only one of many throughout the country. Nevertheless, it will make an important contribution to providing for our national energy needs and relieve us from the threat to our national security which results from our dependence on foreign countries. Puget Power and the consortium working with it on construction of the plant have already spent about two hundred sixty million dollars on preliminary work on the project. This appears to be going down the drain rapidly in light of the December 31, 1979 deadline and the inaction of the



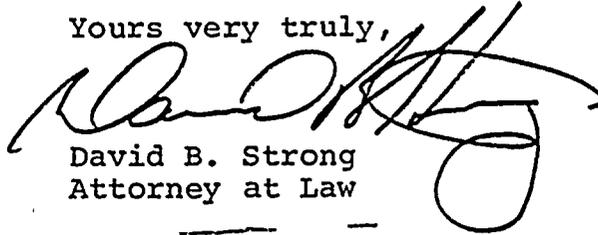
President James Earl Carter

November 29, 1979

page 4

Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Extending authorization of the limited work permit beyond December 31, 1979 will only result in additional costs and further delays. I urge that you exercise your executive authority to resolve this matter in the national interest prior to December 31, 1979. Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter in the face of the other demands upon your time.

Yours very truly,



David B. Strong
Attorney at Law

DBS/cmck
enclosure

cc Mr. John Ellis, President Puget Sound Power & Light Company
Honorable Dixie Lee Ray, Governor, State of Washington



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Local

Puget rezone still up in air

MOUNT VERNON — Despite Tuesday's denial of a six-month rezone contract extension, Puget Sound Power and Light and Skagit County officials aren't through with each other yet.

The county planning commission will hold a public hearing at 8 p.m. Dec. 17 in the county administration building hearing rooms to consider an application by Puget Power for a three-year contract extension.

The company is seeking an extension of its contract with the county to permit construction of nuclear power plants at Bacus Hill near Sedro-Woolley. Without an extension, the contract will expire Dec. 31 and the industrial zoning at the site will revert to forestry.

Puget Power requested a six-month extension in October. But after the Nuclear Regulatory Commission announced a moratorium on licensing new plants, the company changed its request to a three-year extension.

By then, however, public hearings already had begun on the six-month application and the prosecuting attorney's office ruled the requests must be treated separately.

At present, only one night is scheduled for the public hearing.

If the rezone request is denied, Puget Power could file an appeal in Superior Court.

"We'll have to examine ways to get the rezone extended, through litigation or whatever," Don Noel, Puget Power spokesman, said. "Our plan is to prove the site safe and pursue the rezone, and then shelve it until we think we can build on the site."

Puget Power reportedly is studying other possible sites. A power plant at Hanford "is a very definite possibility but it doesn't mean we'd abandon the Skagit site," Noel said.

Puget Power, Washington Water Power Co. of Spokane, Portland General Electric and Pacific Power and Light have spent about \$260 million on preliminary work on the project, Noel said. Puget Power's share is about \$106 million.



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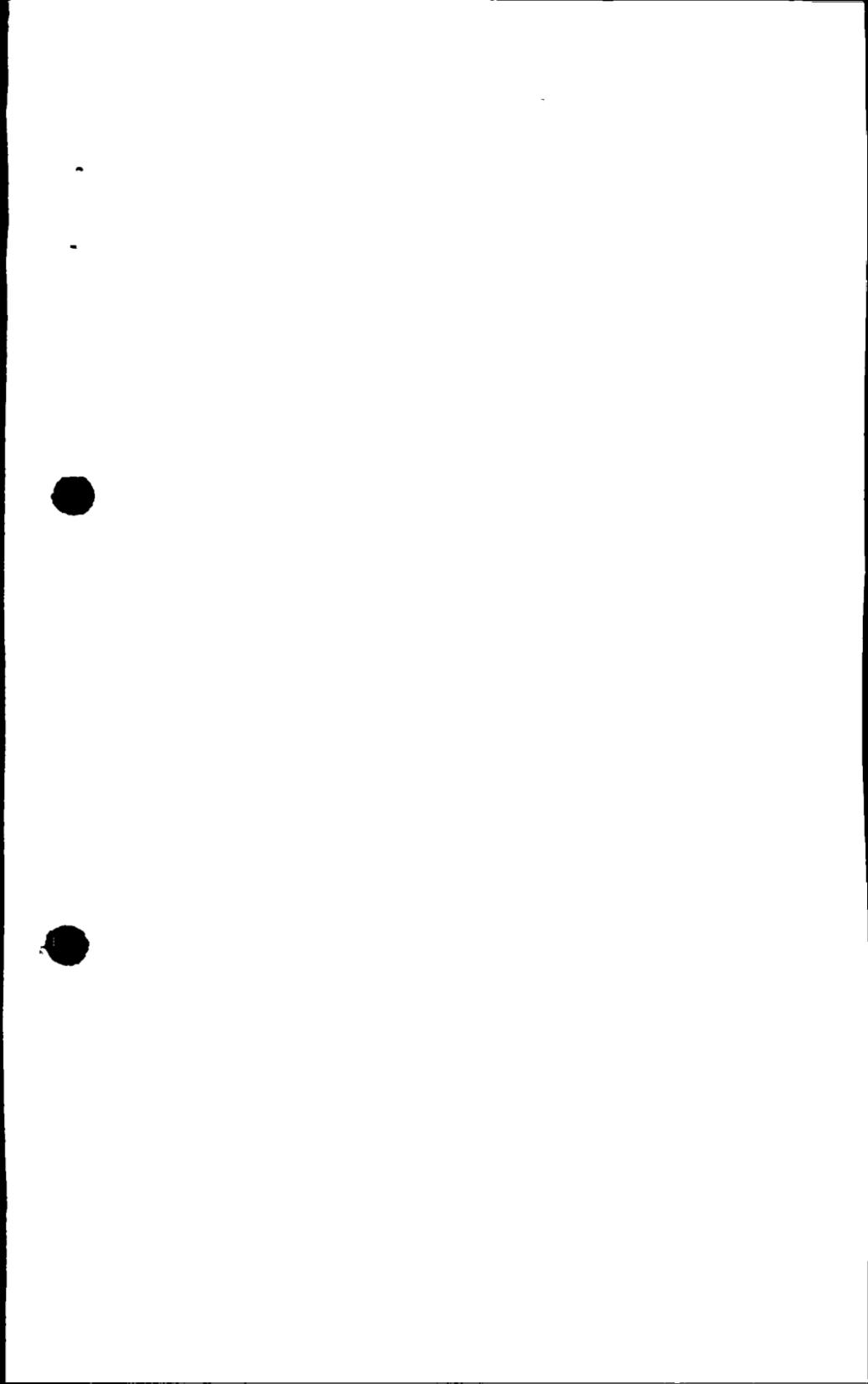
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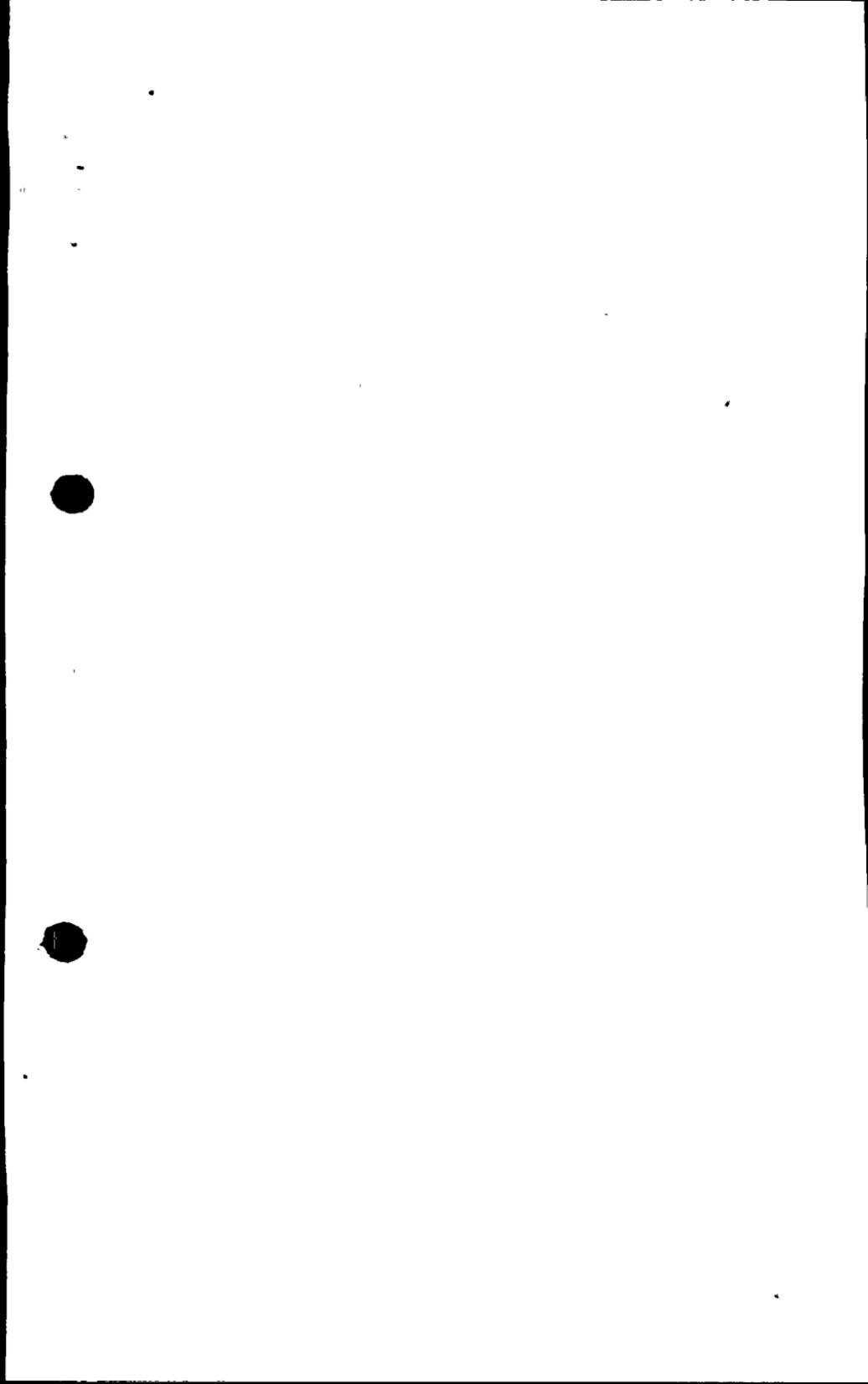
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Ltr from David B. Strong concerning delays in construction of the Skagit plant	

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JCAE NOTIFICATION RECOMMENDED: YES NO





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WASHINGTON

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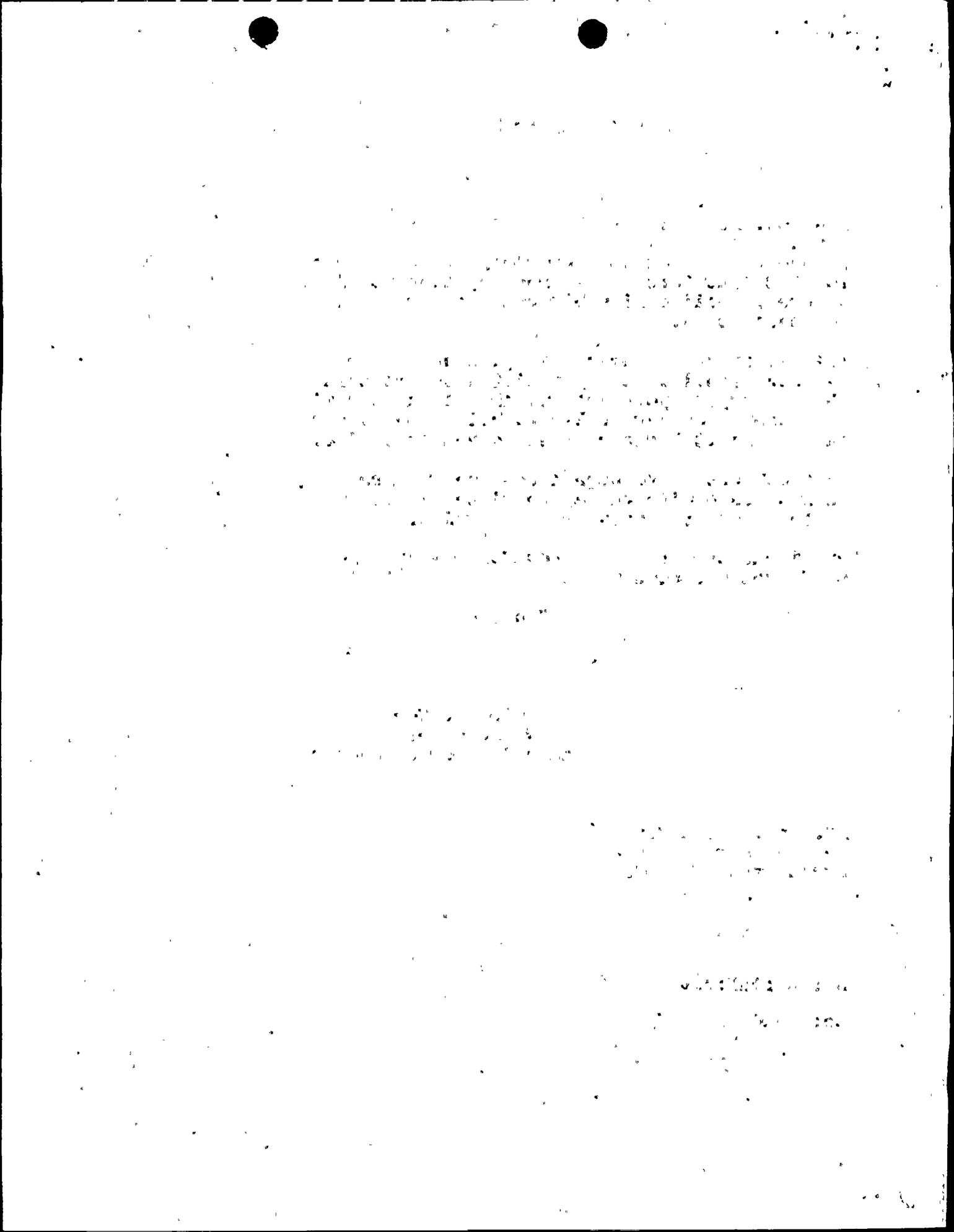
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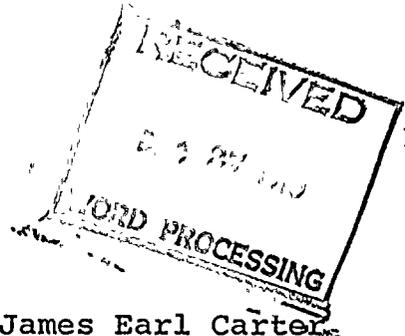
DAVID B. STRONG

ATTORNEY AT LAW

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The Whitehouse
Washington, D.C. 20500

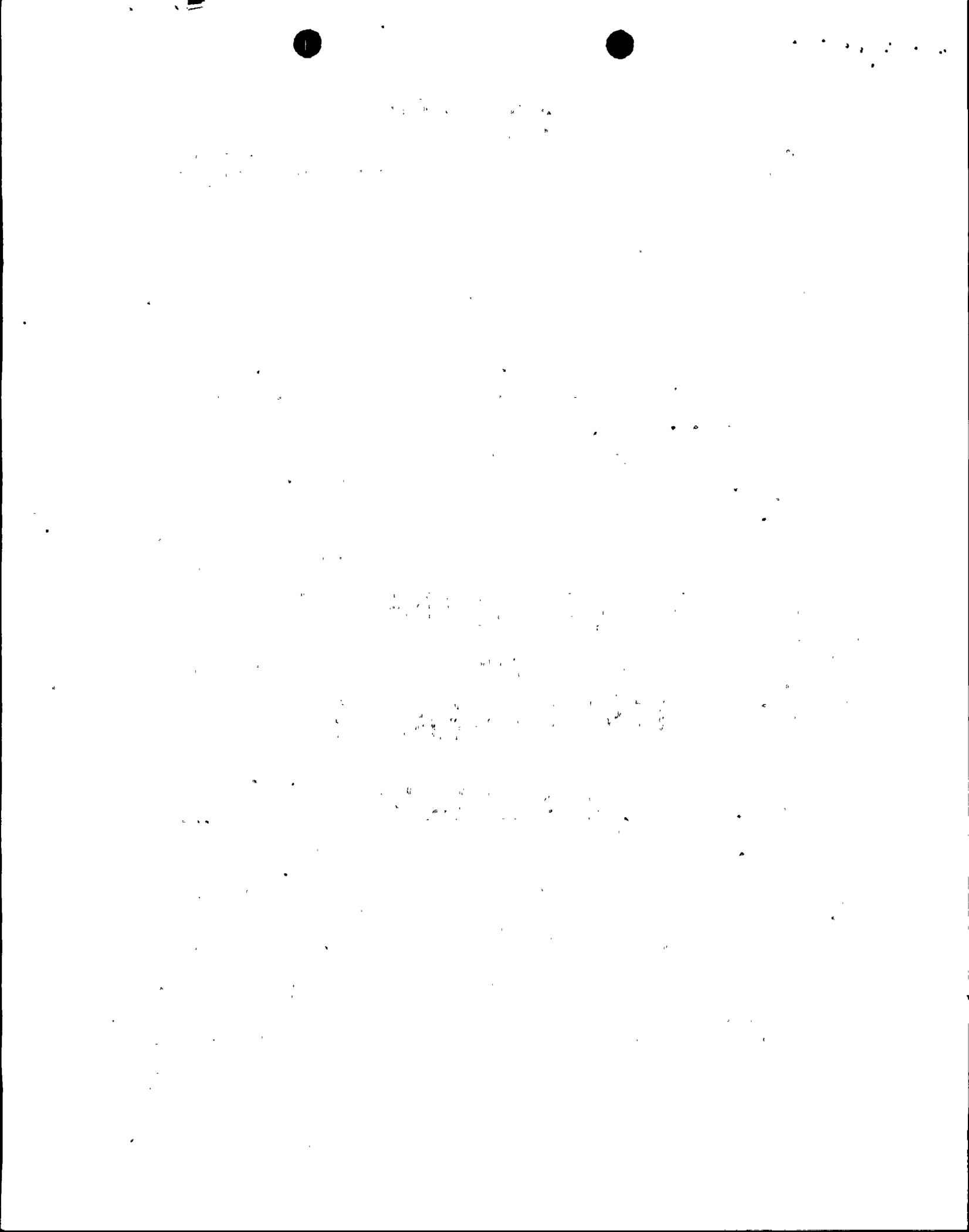
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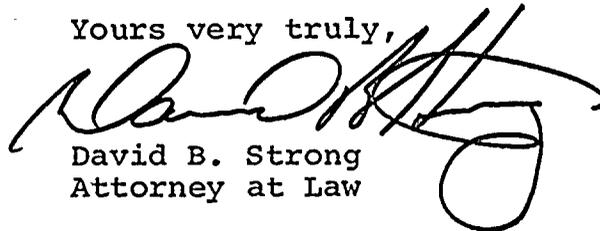
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Attorney at Law

DBS/cmK
enclosure

cc Mr. John Ellis, President Puget Sound Power & Light Company
Honorable Dixie Lee Ray, Governor, State of Washington

