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April 4, 1979

Hdqtrs, PDH

Joseph M. Hendrie, Chairman  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
1717 H Street N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman,

In view of the recent incident at the Three Mile Island nuclear facility in Pennsylvania, it is apparent that the potential for similar accidents exists elsewhere. Nuclear plants engineered by Babcock and Wilcox would seem in particular to warrant close examination.

The Rancho Seco nuclear facility, operated by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, lies within my Congressional district. As you might imagine, many of my constituents are concerned, confused, and frightened by what happened in Pennsylvania, and are asking if a similar accident might not occur at Rancho Seco.

In addition to the safety reports which you have asked all Babcock and Wilcox plants to submit within a ten-day period, I therefore respectfully urge that you order your staff to conduct a complete and thorough investigation of the construction, procedures, and operations at the Rancho Seco facility. Although such an investigation should focus on areas and systems similar to those that failed at Three Mile Island, it should also be wide-ranging in nature. For example, there is evidence that Rancho Seco's cooling towers do not meet with federal earthquake standards; the electrical systems within the plant have been judged to be faulty in some instances.

I would appreciate your reporting back to me at your earliest convenience. Given the uncertainty that now exists, it is important that we know as soon as possible if operations may safely continue, or if Rancho Seco should be shut down until the questions raised by Three Mile Island are answered.

Sincerely,

*Norman D. Shumway*  
Norman D. Shumway  
Member of Congress

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