

September 26.

Pa. Governor Thornburgh and the NRC Commissioners

Time (4)

Gentlemen:

The following clipping is from an article in the New York Times, September 23:

Governor Thornburgh has strongly protested the utility's plan to start up the twin of the damaged reactor, which was shut down for repairs at the time of the accident.

"As Governor," Mr. Thornburgh wrote the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in June, "I have a deeply felt responsibility for both the physical and psychological security of the citizens of this commonwealth. Therefore, I am advising you of my strong opposition to any plans to reactivate Unit One until a number of very serious issues have been resolved."

Six weeks later, on Aug. 9, the commission forbade restarting of Unit One pending extensive public hearings on whether the design of the Three Mile Island reactors made them subject to unusual problems. The hearings are expected to take at least a year and a half.

Other (B&W) reactors in nuclear power plants of similar vintage and design are operating all over the country, with appropriate technical fixes learned from TMI-2. Why do we have to wait for 1 1/2 years of public hearings to restart TMI-1? You know that TMI-1 can be operated as safely as the other ones - why not shut all the rest down for the "psychological security of the citizens" of their states?

What about the "psychological security" of the consumers of electricity from Met Ed, who will see their electric heating bills \$50-\$100/month higher this January and February. They can thank you, Governor, for contributing to the year and a half schedule.

This business of going through a year and a half of public hearings looks very political anyway - there is political hay to be made - votes to be obtained - by not allowing TMI-1 to restart. I think that consumers are realizing what is happening and I hope and believe the votes for this political behavior will turn out to be negative.

And to the NRC commissioners I would ask, "Where is your backbone?" You have no more reason to keep TMI-1 shut down than any other similar plant. And a year and a half of hearings is criminal.

Sincerely,

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