

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

December 14, 1978

Mr. Harold Denton
Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Safety
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Denton:

This letter is in reference to several Wilmington newspaper articles concerning area nuclear power plants: Peach Bottom (PA) II & III and Salem (NJ) I.

I am more than a little disturbed at the content of these stories. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff inspectors claim that serious safety hazards exist at these plants. A memorandum prepared by these same inspectors indicates, for example, that Peach Bottom management isn't capable of correcting increasing levels of radiation; management response is slow and the operating staff is error prone (Wilmington News-Journal, November 21, 1978, "Area Nuke Plants Charged with Serious Safety Hazards" by Arthur Howe.).

These characterizations portend potentially serious, surely destructive, consequences unless we move to correct the problems described in the memorandum and the news story. I invite your reassurance that these sources overstate the realities.

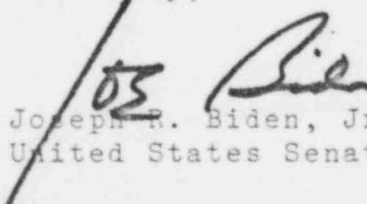
More than this, I'd like you to arrange a briefing for my staff on the possible problems present at these nuclear power plants. I'd prefer at least one of the authors of the mentioned memorandum to be present and participate in the briefing. Furthermore, since I have not seen the memorandum, I would appreciate it if you would send me a copy so I could evaluate the information firsthand.

Please contact Mr. Paul Laudicina of my Washington office at 224-5042 to arrange the specifics of the briefing.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

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Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
United States Senator

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