

NRC PDR



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

JAN 13 1980

Mr. Brian Jenkins
7100 Jonestown Road
Harrisburg, PA 17112

Dear Brian,

Your letter of April 9 to President Carter concerning the Three Mile Island accident was forwarded to me for reply. I regret that, because of a marked increase in agency work load, so much time has passed before I could respond to your inquiry.

Regarding your question about the possibility of the Three Mile Island Plant blowing up, there was no possibility of a nuclear explosion such as that which happens in a bomb. Furthermore, you may be assured that there is no possibility of such a nuclear explosion occurring in a nuclear power plant accident.

For a few days after the accident, there was some concern that a hydrogen bubble in the reactor vessel might react explosively with the oxygen thought to be slowly accumulating in the bubble. There was concern that such a chemical explosion might break the reactor vessel, breach the containment building, and allow the escape of large amounts of radioactive materials. However, after further consultation with experts, NRC concluded that such an explosion could not occur, because essentially no oxygen would accumulate in the bubble; therefore, there was no time at which the plant could have blown up.

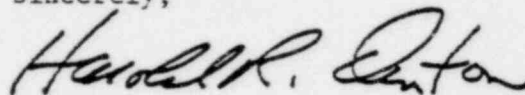
The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is taking an active role in investigating the accident. In particular several NRC staff task forces have been organized to identify and evaluate safety concerns, which originated from the Three Mile Island accident, that merit consideration in the licensing actions for presently operating reactors as well as those for which operating licenses and construction permits are pending.

The task forces' reviews have disclosed a number of actions in the areas of design and analysis and plant operations that will be required in the short term to provide substantial additional protection of the public health and safety. All nuclear power plants in operation or under construction will be affected to varying degrees by the specific recommendations.

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We appreciate your concern and assure you that every effort is being made to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of the public, not only at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Station, but at all other nuclear power plants as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harold R. Denton". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

NRC

POOR ORIGINAL

7100 Jones town Pk.
Hbg. Pa. 17112
April 9/79

President Carter
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington D.C.

Dear Sir:

I am deeply concerned with the incident at Three Mile Island. I would like to ask you a few questions. For one thing, I heard a rumor that the T.M.I. power plant was going to blow up and kill many people in the surrounding area of 20 miles. Some people would not be able to return home for as many as 20 to 30 years. Is this true?

I would like to say that I think that those people that destroy land should be responsible for their actions. Don't you agree?

Please send me any information about T.M.D., because I think we are not being told the whole truth.

Sincerely,

Brian Jenkins
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