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JAN 21 1980

Ms. Susan N. Brandt
 P. O. Box 81
 Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania 17064

Dear Ms. Brandt:

Your postcard to Commissioner Hendrie concerning the release of radioactive material from the Three Mile Island nuclear station has been referred to me for response. I regret that this answer has been delayed. The accident and its consequences have created a substantial increase in the agency's workload, which has prevented us from responding to you as promptly as we would have liked.

Releases of radioactive gases from the containment building and releases of contaminated water, except for releases to the Susquehanna River of liquids containing only low or nondetectable levels of radioactivity, are not currently permitted. Before such releases take place, NRC will evaluate the impact and the evaluation will be made available to the public. By this course of action, we will assure that a thorough assessment is completed prior to release of the contaminated gases and liquids and that the health and safety of the offsite population will be protected.

As a result of releases containing only low or nondetectable levels of radioactivity, the levels of radioactivity in the Susquehanna are indistinguishable from existing background levels at public water supply intakes from the river. These levels have been confirmed by independent measurements made by the NRC, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Commission has recently authorized use of the EPICOR-II water treatment system for processing the waste water stored in tanks in the auxiliary building. This processing will clean up the water to the extent that it will not pose further risk to the public or operations personnel. Before any of the decontaminated water is disposed of, NRC will issue an environmental assessment, which will be made available to the public.

We appreciate your concerns and assure you that every effort is being made to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of the public.

Sincerely,

15/

Harold R. Denton, Director
 Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

OFFICE	TMI/TF Woliu	TMI/TF SMiner	TMI Support RVollmer	NRR:D/DIR ECase	NRR:DIR HDenton
SURNAME	Woliu:bmf	SMiner	RVollmer		
DATE	1/16/80	1/17/80	1/17/80		