

POOR
ORIGINAL

FEB 25 1980

Mr. Donald M. Smith
Box 145, Hickory Road
Countryside Lake
Mundelein, Illinois 60060

Dear Mr. Smith:

Your letter to Chairman Ahearne favoring the resumption of operation at the Three Mile Island nuclear station has been referred to me for response.

On July 2, 1979, the Commission ordered that Three Mile Island Unit 1 (TMI-1) remain in a cold shutdown condition until further order by the Commission and stated that a public hearing would be held prior to restart of TMI-1. The Commission believes that public participation is a vital ingredient in matters related to TMI-1 restart plans.

On August 9, 1979, the Commission issued an additional Order on TMI-1 specifying the basis for the Shutdown Order and the procedures to govern the hearing regarding restart. On the basis of this hearing, the Commission will determine whether any further operation of TMI-1 will be permitted and, if so, under what conditions. I have enclosed a copy of the August 9, 1979, Order for your information.

The Commission's Order also identifies a number of items that must be resolved prior to restart. These items, which are listed on pages 5-7 of the Order, include but go beyond those required for restart of other Babcock & Wilcox-design pressurized water reactors similar to TMI-1 and -2. These additional items include those recommended by the Lessons Learned Task Force, which studied the TMI accident.

The Commission carefully considered the time required for completing all tasks related to the Order. (A Commission schedule calling for expeditious handling of the necessary NRC staff and procedural actions required for the hearing process is provided on the last page of the Commission's Order.) Based on

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that schedule and the delays that have taken place, I do not believe that the restart of TMI-1 will be achieved before the end of 1980.

With regard to Three Mile Island Unit 2, the licensee has not yet submitted to the NRC a proposal for overall plant recovery, although the licensee is conducting feasibility studies. It is not possible at this time to determine when such proposals for recovery may be submitted or how much time will be needed for the required reviews and approvals in connection with Unit 2's recovery. I would note, however, that the licensee's authority to operate Unit 2, except for those actions necessary to keep the reactor shutdown, was suspended by Order of July 20, 1979.

I am pleased that your letter indicates confidence that nuclear facilities can be operated safely. Please be assured that the NRC will continue to pursue the highest standards of safety and will apply the results of investigations, such as the President's Commission, to future licensing of nuclear plants.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Richard H. Vollmer
Richard H. Vollmer, Director
Three Mile Island Support

Enclosure: Commission Order
dtd. 8/9/79

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OFFICE	TMI/task force	TMI/TF <i>D/B</i>	D/TMI-2		
SURNAME	W01iu:mp	SMiner <i>for</i>	RHVollmer		
DATE	2/19/80	2/19/80	2/24/80		

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