



JOSEPH M. SULLIVAN, JR.
VICE PRESIDENT

7/1/79

December 18, 1979

Mr. Harold R. Denton
Director, Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Office
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Denton:

I am writing to ask your help in overturning a decision that could have a profound impact on the utilities industry and the nation as a whole. On November 5, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission stopped issuing construction permits and operating licenses for nuclear power plants. The freeze could last anywhere from six months to two years.

There are seven nuclear units awaiting the licenses that would allow them to begin commercial operations. Since a typical reactor displaces about 10 million barrels of oil a year, these nuclear facilities could be helping the United States offset the oil we are losing because of the Iranian shut-off. Each "frozen" reactor deprives the nation of enough energy to power 300,000 automobiles.

Each week that one of these reactors is not in operation, consumers ultimately will have to pay \$2 million in interest charges alone. Replacement energy costs will be between \$2 million and \$6 million a week, depending on whether it comes from coal, oil, or a combination of those two more expensive generating fuels.

The Presidential Commission which investigated the Three Mile Island accident rejected precisely the kind of moratorium the NRC has imposed, suggesting instead that each nuclear unit be considered on a plant-by-plant basis.

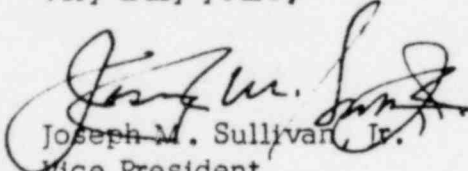
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The NRC freeze ignores the many initiatives taken by the nuclear power industry since TMI. Although no one was killed or injured in that mishap, the utilities industry has taken steps that will make nuclear energy even safer. These lessons can be applied without a licensing moratorium.

Your help and consideration is appreciated.

Very truly yours,


Joseph M. Sullivan, Jr.
Vice President

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