



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

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APR 3 1980

Mr. and Mrs. John Lehman
117 North 3rd St.
Columbia, PA 12512

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Lehman:

I am writing in response to your letter to Commissioner Hendrie regarding the accident at Three Mile Island. I regret that this answer to your letter has been delayed. The accident and its consequences have created a substantial increase in the agency's workload, which has prevented me from responding to you as promptly as I would have liked to.

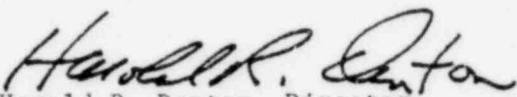
With regard to your comments concerning the possible future operation of Three Mile Island Unit 1, the Commission has ordered that a public hearing be conducted to determine whether the facility should be operated and, if so, under what conditions restart of Unit 1 would take place. Prior to start of the hearings, the NRC staff will conduct a review of technical information concerning the restart of Unit 1. As part of this review, the NRC staff will conduct meetings with the licensee in the presence of the public, and the public will be given the opportunity to raise questions and to make statements. During the hearing, the technical issues which are appropriate to assure the public health and safety will also be addressed. In addition, the Hearing Board may consider the psychological impact of future operation on the nearby communities. You are encouraged to participate in these meetings and the hearing.

With regard to your concern about the EPICOR-II water treatment system, the Commission has authorized use of this system for processing the waste water stored in tanks in the auxiliary building. We do not currently permit the discharge of water processed by the EPICOR-II system. The disposal of the water processed by EPICOR-II will be addressed in a separate Environmental Assessment, as required by the Commission's Statement of May 25, 1979. Copies of the Environmental Assessment will be made available for public comment.

Since Metropolitan Edison has not yet submitted a proposal on the disposal method of the decontaminated water, we have yet to prepare the Environmental Assessment. We anticipate that several months will pass before any decisions are made on disposal of the water.

I 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, not only at the Three Mile Island Station, but also at all nuclear power plants.

Sincerely,

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

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation