



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

APR 11 1980

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS
POOR QUALITY PAGES

Mr. Gordon H. Spittel
3625 Langrehr Road
Rockville, Maryland 21207

Dear Mr. Spittel:

This is in reply to your letter of February 23, 1980, to President Carter as regards item 1 on nuclear power plants.

A statement by President Carter on December 7, 1979, about the Report of the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island (the Kemeny Commission) included the following:

"Finally, I would like to discuss how we manage the transition period during which the Kemeny recommendations are being implemented. There are a number of new nuclear plants now awaiting operating licenses or construction permits.

"Licensing decisions rest with the NRC and, as the Kemeny Commission noted, it has the authority to proceed with licensing these plants on a case-by-case basis, which may be used as circumstances surrounding a plant dictate. The NRC has indicated, however, that it will pause in issuing new licenses and construction permits in order to devote its full attention to putting its house in order. I endorse the approach the NRC has adopted, but I urge the NRC to complete its work as quickly as possible, and in any event no later than six months from today.

"Once we have instituted the necessary reforms to assure safety, we must resume the licensing process promptly so that the new plants which we need to reduce our dependence on foreign oil can be built and operated."

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is committed to protect the public health and safety. The Three Mile Island accident resulted in a need for changes in the approach to safety. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has found that actions recommended by its own staff and by the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island in the areas of human factors, operational safety, emergency planning, nuclear power plant design and siting, health effects, and public information are necessary and feasible.

Mr. Gordon H. Spittel

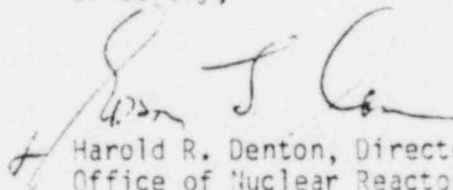
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At this time we are preparing for review and approval by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission an Action Plan that will specify the precise actions to be taken. It will include new or improved safety objectives, detailed criteria for their implementation, and various implementation deadlines. As soon as the Action Plan is completed and approved, the resulting regulatory requirements will be transmitted to all utilities concerned.

It is recognized that there will be a significant effect on the availability of power generating capacity if those plants now in the final stages of construction do not receive operating licenses by the dates previously anticipated, and every effort is being made to avoid unnecessary delays. With this objective, the Commissioners approved on February 28, 1980, the issuance of an NRC license to the Tennessee Valley Authority for the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant Unit 1 to load fuel and, under specified conditions, to operate at low power levels for testing. Several other similar cases are under consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harold R. Denton".

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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NRC

3625 Sangre de Road
Rockdale, Maryland 21207
February 23, 1980

The President of the United States
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear President Carter:

Two items exist which I believe require immediate attention. The first is far more serious than the second which in itself can have a disastrous long range effect.

1. I believe that for the foreseeable future we will have to depend on nuclear energy generation. My opinion is that the NRC should move to have the "shut-down" plants activated as soon as is safely possible. Many of these plants are close to us here near Washington: YEPSCO, BGE and TMI. I know that waste disposal is a serious problem but am sure your commission will provide an answer.

2. The Department of Energy has recently issued a directive that no DOE functions shall be held in States which have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. This is a most undemocratic action. Regardless of the issue, such a stand abuses the free vote of a people or state. I urge you to reconsider this action.

Sincerely yours,

Gordon H. Spittler