



CHAIRMAN

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

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April 17, 1980

The Honorable Patricia Roberts Harris
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Harris:

In the aftermath of the Three Mile Island accident, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission established a Special Inquiry Group, directed by Mr. Mitchell Rogovin, Esq., to review and report on the accident. On November 15, 1979, Mr. Rogovin sent a memorandum to the NRC Commissioners, describing what he termed the "serious public health matter" posed by the "continuing mental stress of a significant fraction of the residents within the vicinity of Three Mile Island Unit 2." Mr. Rogovin proposed that a program be instituted for informing local residents, as accurately as possible, of the nature of the threat which the accident posed to them. He also stated that the severe mental stress experienced by area residents "may warrant the use of human service workers in facilitating more comprehensive care for those who may develop emotional problems," noting that "it may be appropriate" for the National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) to implement such a program. A copy of Mr. Rogovin's memorandum appears as Attachment A to this letter.

On November 30, 1979, the Commission forwarded Mr. Rogovin's memorandum to Governor Thornburgh of Pennsylvania, stating that the Commission believed the Governor's views would be of the utmost value in evaluating Mr. Rogovin's recommendations. A copy of the Commission's letter appears as Attachment B to this letter.

Lieutenant Governor William W. Scranton III of Pennsylvania responded to the Commission's letter in a reply dated February 28, 1980. His letter, which appears as Attachment C, stated that the Commonwealth was "well aware of the trauma created by the accident for some Central Pennsylvania residents," and endorsed Mr. Rogovin's proposals as to the content and presentation of a program of public information. Such a program, the Lieutenant Governor observed, was one of the recommendations of the report of the Governor's Commission on Three Mile Island.