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APR 30 1980

Mr. Floyd W. Lewis, Chairman
TMI Ad Hoc Nuclear Oversight Committee
Middle South Utilities, Inc.
P. O. Box 61005
New Orleans, Louisiana 70161

Dear Mr. Lewis:

Please accept my apology for the delay in responding to your letter of February 18, 1980, to Chairman Ahearne. You expressed concern in your letter that new requirements embodied in our Action Plan generating from TMI could become a counterproductive burden on the limited resources of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and industry.

One purpose of the Action Plan is to schedule the development and implementation of these new requirements in a manageable form that will not overload the available resources of either the NRC or the industry while providing the necessary improvements in the design and operation of nuclear power plants. The considerable effort by the Atomic Industrial Forum and the Nuclear Safety Analysis Center to define the scope, priority, and cost of the tasks within the NRC Action Plan has been a significant contribution toward accomplishing this purpose.

The Action Plan also reduces the uncertainty of what may be required in the future. The most important lessons learned over the past year have been applied and further changes are being pursued at a more deliberate pace as scheduled in the Action Plan. The NRC is developing and implementing additional TMI-related requirements in a priority order that considers both their safety significance and resource requirements. The staff is proposing a policy for implementing these additional TMI-related requirements that has the following features. Public comments would be obtained on the substance and scheduling of the most significant of these requirements prior to issuance. These requirements would be applied uniformly to operating plants and to plants under construction, except where specifically differentiated by rule making. Each requirement would be implemented by some specified date on all plants, but with individual exceptions allowed for good cause. Implementation deadlines would be set so as to avoid downtime on operating plants or delay in the start-up of plants under construction beyond that necessary to accomplish the change in an orderly manner.

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Mr. Floyd W. Lewis

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Such a process would assure that new requirements are implemented in an orderly and responsible manner and yet promptly incorporate the necessary improvements identified through research, review, and experience.

Sincerely,

(Signed) William J. Dircks

William J. Dircks
Acting Executive Director
for Operations

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4/29/80 Retyped in EDO office. *See previous concurrences.

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