



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

NRC PDR
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APR 17 1980

Mr. Roger J. Sherman, Chairman
Atomic Industrial Forum, Inc.
Washington, D. C. 20014

Dear Mr. Sherman:

Your letter dated March 18, 1980, to Chairman Ahearne has been referred to my office for response. In your letter, you state a number of AIF positions supporting your perception of the NRC's "slowness in overcoming the post-TMI inertia that continues to hold hostage pending construction permits and operating licenses". While you make a number of valid points in your letter regarding the pace of licensing, I believe that the NRC has constructively used the time between the accident at Unit 2 of Three Mile Island in March 1979 and the issuance of the five percent power operating license for Sequoyah in February 1980 to re-examine the bases of our licensing posture, evaluate the recommendations of both the Kemeny and Rogovin reports and to gather the collective judgments of all this investigative effort into a summary document, NUREG-0660, "NRC Action Plans Developed As A Result Of The TMI-2 Accident", (Draft 3), March 5, 1980.

We, too, regret that this deliberative process has delayed the normal licensing schedules; however, we believe that the Action Plans submitted to the Commission in March 1980 must have included our considered judgment of the recommendations of the Kemeny and Rogovin reports. Anything less than this would certainly not have enhanced confidence in our ability to carry out the public trust assigned to us nor would it have been responsive to the views put forth by those responsible commissions specifically convened to evaluate our performance in discharging our duties.

Moreover, it is my further belief that the time used to consider and issue the criteria contained in the Action Plans permitted us to reach a balanced approach. Specifically, I believe that the Action Plans are neither a hasty reaction to the extreme amount of publicity flooding the public immediately following the accident nor is it "business as usual" as many critics of the nuclear industry have charged in the past.

I think that you as a spokesman for the nuclear industry should welcome the inclusion of the five Commissioners into the deliberative process as evidenced by the careful consideration recently given by the Commission to the Sequoyah OL application. This direct involvement by the Commission allowed, in my opinion, a rapid surfacing of pertinent outstanding safety issues and an equally rapid resolution of them. It also permitted the Commissioners, the staff, and the nuclear power industry to focus on those issues requiring more attention in light of what we all learned following the TMI accident.