



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

APR 3 1980

Mrs. Sylvia Seiderly
3707 Green Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110

Dear Mrs. Seiderly:

I am writing in response to your letter to President Carter 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.

Information about the accident made available to the public was confusing for a number of reasons. Some problems were attributable to the sources of information, some to the way in which information was made available to the press, and some to how the press reported the information it obtained. NRC's information was not always complete, nor in some instances, wholly accurate.

We recognize the importance of making complete and accurate information available to the public. Consequently, we have made specific plans for providing information to the public for such potentially serious accidents as occurred at Three Mile Island. These plans include making the availability of public information part of NRC's and the utilities' emergency response planning. Under this policy, the utilities must provide offsite locations for newscenters. We also plan to appoint a senior NRC official responsible for coordinating NRC information activities during an emergency. By centralizing the gathering and dissemination of NRC's information, we will provide the public with relevant and timely information.

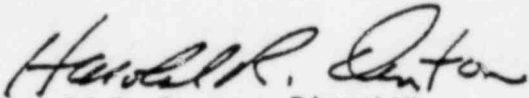
The safety of residents near the Three Mile Island plant was under constant surveillance during the period March 28-April 14, until cold shutdown of the Unit 2 reactor was certain. Because the accident resulted in no detrimental effect to the offsite public, no General Emergency was called such occur during a hurricane, when there may be a high probability of damage and loss of life. As a precautionary measure, Governor Thornburgh issued a statement advising that pregnant women and preschool children leave the area within a five-mile radius of the plant. Infants and fetuses are seen as more susceptible to the effects of radiation than the general population.

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS
POOR QUALITY PAGES

Proposed evacuation routes for citizens in Pennsylvania are currently being developed by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. Specific information about proposed evacuation routes can be obtained from the following source:

Colonel Orren K. Henderson
Pennsylvania Emergency
Management Agency
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Sincerely,


Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation