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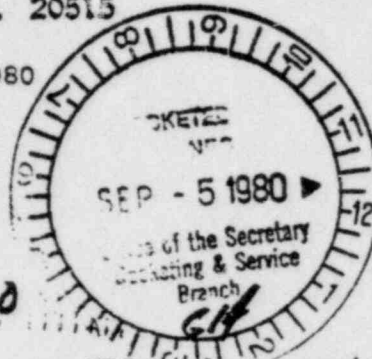
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

August 28, 1980

Chairman John F. Ahearne
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Ahearne:

DOCKET NUMBER
PROD. & UTIL. 320



It has been brought to my attention that an NRC employee assigned to the Three Mile Island (TMI) project, Dr. Bernard Snyder, indicated at a press conference this week that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission may have to involve the Department of Energy in handling the radioactive waste from TMI. If the Department of Energy were to become involved, the Savannah River Plant (SRP) in South Carolina could be a prime candidate to receive this waste.

As the Congressman representing the Savannah River Plant area, I would actively object to any decision to dispose of Three Mile Island's radioactive waste at any Department of Energy facility, and in particular, at the Savannah River facility. As an unlicensed defense facility, SRP would not be the appropriate disposal site for licensed commercial waste. From a technical position, the commercial waste would best be handled with other commercial waste, rather than disposing of it with defense waste.

While I recognize the vast problems facing the Commission as you work on the clean-up of Three Mile Island, I feel it is important to acknowledge that Three Mile should not become the federal government's total responsibility. The matter of TMI waste disposal is a complex problem, however, it appears to me that the Commission, in turning to the Energy Department, is opting for a convenient solution rather than making a difficult decision based on technological and safety conditions.

Further, South Carolina has been accepting a disproportionate amount of the nation's nuclear waste for many years. We are presently receiving approximately 70 percent of the commercial low-level radioactive waste and a significant amount of defense high and low-level waste is being stored at SRP. It would be totally unrealistic to expect South Carolina to accept the commercial waste from TMI and I would hope that the Commission would seek a better solution to the disposal problem rather than seeking a bail-out from the Energy Department.

With kindest regards, I am

Respectfully,

BUTLER DERRICK
Member of Congress

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