

Local PDR



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

OCT 1 0 1980

Mr. Robert T. Rayne
114 Oak Forest
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060

Dear Mr. Rayne:

Your letter to President Carter about the health effects of the accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear station was referred to me for response. I regret that this answer 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.

A team of investigators from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare calculated the doses to the people living within 50 miles of the Three Mile Island site and estimated the number of new cancers that would result from the exposure to the radioactivity that leaked out of the plant. The team reported their work in a report entitled, "Population Dose and Health Impact of the Accident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Station" (NUREG-0558). They concluded that the offsite collective dose associated with radioactive material released from March 28, 1979, to April 7, 1979, represents minimal risks (that is, a very small number of additional health effects to the offsite population). Enclosed for your information is the summary of NUREG-0558.

You may also be interested in the enclosed press release from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, which discusses infant mortality in the state. You will see that the fetal death rate actually dropped after the accident at TMI.

Your letter implies that NRC should phase out nuclear power plants. NRC's primary responsibility consists in the licensing, inspection, and enforcement of regulations for nuclear power plants in the interest of public health and safety and for the protection of the environment. Changes in NRC's regulatory responsibilities can stem from the public's will and the resulting Congressional action.

I appreciate your concerns and assure you that every effort is being made to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of the public.

Sincerely,

Bernard J. Snyder
Bernard J. Snyder, Program Director
Three Mile Island Program Office
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

- Enclosures: 1. Summary of NUREG-0558
2. Press release

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Dear President Carter,

A woman in Harrisburg is suing because she feels her stillborn child is the result of three M. 1.0 Island contamination. You and all who support nuclear power share in the responsibility for this. To continue to use one of the most expensive and dangerous sources of power shows an obvious allegiance to something or someone other than the American people. All the people of this country don't know of the danger, but they will eventually. You have only to choose how the people see you on this matter, as an adversary, or as a leader, because the people will turn on nuclear power with or without you. Thank you

Robert F. Payne