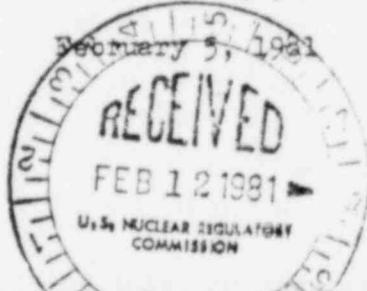


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PROD. & UTIL. FAC.

Jim Perkins  
Box 1378  
State College, Pa. 16801

Commissioner Ahearne  
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555



Dear Mr. Ahearne:

Yesterday in the Harrisburg Patriot and today in the New York Times I read of the rather outlandish proposal of James Tourtelotte that Unit 1 of Three Mile Island be allowed to operate at 5% power before completion of the hearings on restart are completed. Motivation aside, for the moment, this proposal reeks of business-not-only-as-usual, but-worse-than-ever-before. This transparent ploy to get Unit 1 restarted so that the Pennsylvania PUC will or may lift its restriction on Met Ed's access to its ratepayers' pockets for cash is right in line with the worst of the Staff's past tricks. It ranks up there with neglecting to tell the original Intervenor at TMI-2 that the license had been granted. It ranks with neglecting to tell would-be Intervenor Jane Lee that she would not be permitted to intervene in the restart. It ranks with neglecting to complete the appeal on the license of TMI-2 even now, three years later. All the public relations effort of the industry and the professed efforts of the NRC to properly oversee nuclear power pale in the light of this irresponsible suggestion of your Staff's counsel.

As to motive, Mr. Arnold of Metropolitan Edison was quoted as saying he felt that TMI-1 could be put back into service by October. Well, Mr. Arnold and Mr. Tourtelotte should have talked things over first to get their stories straight. The PJM grid, of which all the GPU companies are members, peaks in the summer. Of all the companies in the grid, there is only one that peaks in the winter, Pennsylvania Power and Light, and that company has far and away the greatest excess capacity of any member of the grid. Thus the proposal for an expedited start-up by October is three months too late to be of any help to the members and customers of the PJM grid. It will not be before summer of 1982, at the earliest, that TMI-1 could possible help out with the grid's peaking difficulties. And by that time the NRC and its Staff could have properly completed their hearings, maintained the image of due process at the least, and ruled one way or another on the fate of TMI-1.

Mr. Ahearne, it should be beneath the dignity of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to adopt the industry's red herring of "Blackouts, blackouts, boooo!!!" without at least checking up on the facts. Some may say it is beneath the dignity and, in fact, not even the role of the NRC to adopt the industry's red herring at all. And that may be.

In either case, I urge you to dismiss this frivolous and false suggestion of Mr. Tourtelotte. It is not the NRC's role to help prop up Met Ed. And may I suggest that any evidence that the NRC is trying to do so will not sit very well with the Court as it tries to decide whether the NRC has considered properly the stress of the proposed restart on the residents of the Middletown and Newberry Township areas.

With great concern,

*Jim Perkins*

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