

50-289

April 10, 1981

Mr. John Ahearne, Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Ahearne,

For a number of years now I have studied the benefits and risks of nuclear energy development and the possible alternatives. As a physician I have been especially concerned about potential health hazards from radiation and possible dangers to the delicately balanced life support system that sustains humankind on this wonderful planet.

I am not yet at all convinced that we have adequately resolved issues of safety, waste disposal, potential for human error, or effective operational guidelines for the nuclear industry. Your chairmanship of the NRC means that you must play a key role in safeguarding the future of all mankind. We cannot afford many more accidents like Three-Mile Island. One of them might just get out of hand.

Please consider the availability of safer alternatives if we would just put the resources into their development. Please make the controls and guidelines on the nuclear industry stringent enough to give us the time to come up with the alternatives, before another accident or contamination of our water or air makes life untenable in parts of this wonderful country.

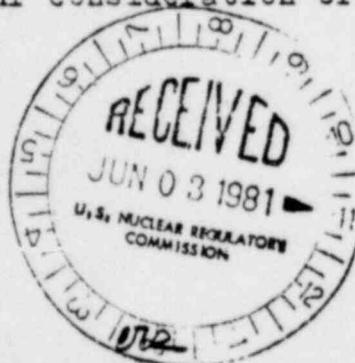
I basically do not believe that the benefits of nuclear energy development justify the risks, but at least give us adequate protection and regulations. Close down the plants that are potentially the most dangerous, especially older plants built without sufficient safeguards. Please do not allow the re-opening of Unit 1 at Three-Mile Island. I am afraid that in the balancing of opinions about plant operation and nuclear safety we will end up with a middle position that is just as risky. It is possible that in the nuclear business any risk is too great a risk.

Again please give us the protections we need. Keep Unit 1 and any other unsafe plants closed. Actively enforce regulations. See that we have a future, not just a bit more energy for awhile.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

Martin Lebowitz M.D.
Martin Lebowitz, M.D.



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