



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

NRC PDR



MAY 15 1981

Mrs. Thelma Kastrup
900 Third Avenue
Sacramento, California 95818

Dear Mrs. Kastrup:

Your letter of March 12, 1981, to President Reagan about nuclear power has been referred to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for reply.

At the end of 1980, there were about 70 operating nuclear power plants in the United States. They generated about 250 million kilowatt-hours of electrical energy in 1980 or about 11 percent of the total generation in the country. In addition, there are about 80 permits in effect for the construction of additional nuclear power plants.

The following are comparable figures for all the rest of the world: about 180 operable nuclear power plants and about 160 under construction. At the end of 1980, the installed capacity of nuclear power plants in the United States was about 55,000 kilowatts, while the corresponding figure for Japan was 15,000, France 13,000, Russia 11,000, West Germany 9,000, United Kingdom 6,000, and Canada 5,000.

Neither in the United States nor in foreign countries has nuclear power grown as rapidly as predicted in the past. Delays in completion of construction have been common.

No new orders for nuclear power plants have been placed in the United States since 1978, and a number of plants previously ordered have been cancelled or deferred. One of the reasons is that forecasts by electric utilities of the rate of growth of electrical requirements have been substantially reduced because of slackening of the economy, rising costs, and conservation by customers. The high capital cost of nuclear power plants makes them especially sensitive to high interest rates. The time required before a nuclear plant can be approved and constructed is also important. The accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in March 1979 and lesser problems at other nuclear plants may have had an effect on decisions by utilities not to initiate new plants. In spite of all these aspects, those utilities operating nuclear plants have found that their low fuel costs generally make them more economical than other plants converting heat to electricity.

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The primary concern of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is the protection of the public health and safety. We are continually trying to improve the licensing process by which this is carried out, but the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is not responsible for promoting nuclear power.

Sincerely,



Gary G. Zech, Chief
Technical Support Branch
Planning and Program Analysis Staff, NRR

INCOMING

March 12, 1981

Sacramento, Ca lif.

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. President:

When we were visiting a relative in London in 1976
he asked us why we weren't using Nuclear Energy like other
countries were. We couldn't give him an answer. Almost
five years have gone by and we are no nearer to using it.

Unless we begin to use the Nuclear Power we have
our future will be jeopardized. Why are we letting this happen?

Sincerely,

Mrs. Thelma Kastrup

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900 Third Ave.
Sacramento, Ca. 95818

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