

April 16, 1993

The Honorable Senator Harris Wofford
United States Senator
Federal Square Station
P. O. Box 55
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Dear Senator Wofford:

This replies to Senator Wofford's April 5 letter to Mr. Harold Denton which transmitted a letter that the Senator received from Nathan C. Peiffer.

Immediately after the unauthorized entry into the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant site, the NRC staff formed an Independent Investigation Team which conducted a detailed review of the circumstances surrounding that event. The Independent Investigation Team recently reported to the Commission on its findings and I am enclosing copies of the "Executive Summary" and the "Findings and Conclusions" section excerpted from the Team's report.

In addition, this intrusion event and the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City led the Commission to direct its staff to "...reevaluate and, if necessary, update the design basis threat for vehicle intrusion and the use of vehicular bombs..." at NRC-licensed nuclear power plants. The Commission expects to receive an initial briefing on the reevaluation effort from its staff on April 22 and the effort to be complete by the end of this year.

The 1979 accident at Unit 2 of the Three Mile Island plant was the most serious in the history of the commercial nuclear power industry in this country, though the impact on the public health and safety and the environment was minimal. In the wake of that accident, the Commission required a large number of improvements in both nuclear power plants licensed for operation and those under construction. Over all, a total of 13,408 separate items were required to be implemented at licensed nuclear power plants around the country. Currently, 13,322 items have been implemented and only 86 remain open from the implementation standpoint.

These actions and other safety improvements mandated by the Commission in the intervening years, as well as many made by the industry itself, have made nuclear power plants licensed for operation safer today than they were in 1979.

-2-

The Honorable Senator Wofford
April 16, 1993

I hope that this information as well as a copy of a fact sheet about the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which also is enclosed, will be helpful to you in replying to Mr. Peiffer's letter.

Sincerely,

JK
Joseph J. Fouchard
Director
Office of Public Affairs

Enclosures:
As stated

cc: SECY CRC-93-0322

Concurrence:

OPA *(initials)*
FLIngram:pc
04/16/93

OPA *(initials)*
JJFouchard
04/16/93