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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 8, 1990

Mr. Kenneth M. Carr, Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Carr:

I am enclosing the latest letter from the Retire Nine Mile One group in Syracuse, signed by their co-chair, Tom Walsh.

The points raised in the letter by Mr. Walsh (no relation to me) will need a response from the N.R.C.

Your assistance in providing me additional information is appreciated. As you know, the problem relating to Nine Mile One is still very much of concern in upstate New York.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Jim Walsh
JAMES T. WALSH
Member of Congress

JTW:aaj
Enclosure

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Retire Nine Mile One

A broad based coalition of citizens concerned about the safety of the Nine Mile One Nuclear Facility

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Steering Committee

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Tom Walsh

April 30, 1990

Dear Congressman Walsh:

Thank you for your attention to our concerns about the Mark 1 containment at Nine Mile One and the effects of advanced aging at the facility. The information provided by the NRC is being evaluated by reactor safety specialists. We will appraise you of their conclusions.

In recent weeks, disturbing information about the role played by The Institute of Nuclear Power Operations in the regulation of nuclear power plants has come to our attention. The institute, known as INPO, was created in the aftermath of the Three Mile Island accident by the nuclear industry to inspect plants and review corporate operations. INPO is a membership organization funded by the utilities. Niagara Mohawk is a member and evaluations have been made of their nuclear operations.

The NRC has transferred some of the monitoring of nuclear power plants, including safety evaluations, to INPO and has acknowledged that they do not wish to duplicate the efforts of INPO. However, INPO is not required to share their findings with the NRC and release of INPO reports to the public is prohibited. An INPO memorandum defends the groups secrecy, stating that "public and/or political pressure may be brought to bear on the NRC to follow-up on INPO evaluations for the purpose of regulatory action."

When the INPO reports on the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant were recently obtained by citizens groups, they revealed a litany of problems never before documented and not addressed

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in the NRC's licensing process for Seabrook. Many of the problems affected crucial safety systems which the company admitted it would not address until after full power operation had begun. Recent testimony before Congress on this matter by Ralph Nader and Robert Pollard is enclosed.

The INPO/Seabrook situation has direct implications for people concerned about the safety of Nine Mile One. For many years, INPO has produced reports about Nine Mile One. How can we be certain the NRC has a complete picture of the condition of Nine Mile One? How can we know that all the problems discovered at Nine Mile One have been addressed if we do not know what the INPO reports on Nine Mile One contain?

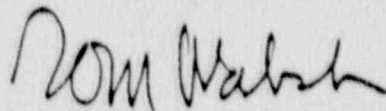
While we recognize the right of organizations to conduct confidential internal evaluations, when INPO conducts an evaluation they are operating in lieu of the NRC. INPO reports should be available to the public as would the reports of the NRC. The current process endorses secrecy and eliminates public accountability.

We ask that you request the NRC to obtain all INPO reports related to Niagara Mohawk's nuclear operations and release them to the public document room as would be required of NRC reports. We also request an accounting of the number of INPO reports produced related to Niagara Mohawk's nuclear operations. We hope you will insure that all information contained in reports relating to Nine Mile One be subject to restart action procedures currently in process by the NRC.

We hope you will share our concern that an industry group has become the industry watchdog, eliminating the public scrutiny of nuclear plants guaranteed by law.

Sincerely,

RETIRE NINE MILE ONE



by Tom Walsh, co-chair