



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

NOV 3 1980

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Mrs. Kathy Herbein
625 Carbon Avenue
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17111

Dear Mrs. Herbein:

Your letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission about the release of krypton-85 from the Three Mile Island nuclear station and urging the facility's permanent shutdown was referred to me for response. I regret that this answer has been delayed for so long. The accident and its consequences have created a substantial increase in the agency's workload, which has prevented me from responding to you as promptly as I would have liked.

With regard to your concern about the purging of the radioactive krypton gas from the reactor building of TMI Unit 2, Metropolitan Edison Company submitted to NRC a "Safety Analysis and Environmental Report" (November 13, 1979) in which it evaluated alternative methods for the disposal of the krypton gases, such as purging and cryogenic processing, and selective absorption. NRC also evaluated alternative methods for disposal of the krypton gas to determine what effect decontamination would have on workers, on the public health and safety, and on the environment. Based on its evaluation, NRC issued an environmental assessment (NUREG-0662 and two addenda) for public comment on March 26, 1980, and received approximately 800 comments. These comments were considered in the staff's preparation of the "Final Environmental Assessment for Decontamination of the Three Mile Island Unit 2 Reactor Building Atmosphere" (NUREG-0662), vols. 1 and 2, copies of which are enclosed for your information.

From this process have emerged the following NRC staff conclusions:

- The potential physical health impact on the public of using any of the proposed strategies for removing the krypton-85 is negligible.
- The potential psychological impact is likely to grow the longer it takes to reach a decision, get started, and complete the process.
- The purging method is the quickest and the safest for the workers on Three Mile Island to accomplish.
- Overall, no significant environmental impact would result from use of any of the alternatives discussed in the assessment.

On June 12, 1980, the Commission issued an Order for Temporary Modification of License, authorizing controlled purging of the krypton-85 from the reactor

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building atmosphere. In a separate Memorandum and Order, also issued on June 12, 1980, the Commission discussed rationale for its decision. Actual purging operations began on June 28, 1980, and were completed on July 11, 1980. The doses resulting from the purge were well within those predicted in section 7.1 of volume 1 of NRC's final environmental assessment. Copies of both Commission issuances are also enclosed.

A team of investigators from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare calculated the doses to the people living within 50 miles of the Three Mile Island site and estimated the number of new cancers that would result from the exposure to the radioactivity that leaked out of the plant. The team reported their work in a report entitled, "Population Dose and Health Impact of the Accident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Station" (NUREG-0558). They concluded that the offsite collective dose associated with radioactive material released from March 28, 1979, to April 7, 1979, represents minimal risks (that is, a very small number of additional health effects to the offsite population). Also enclosed for your information is the summary of NUREG-0558.

With regard to your comments concerning the possible future operation of TMI, the Commission has ordered that a public hearing be conducted to determine whether TMI-1 should be operated and, if so, under what conditions the restart would take place. Prior to start of the hearings, the NRC staff is conducting a review of technical information concerning the restart of Unit 1. As part of this review, the NRC staff has been conducting meetings with the licensee in the presence of the public, and the public was given the opportunity to raise questions and to make statements. During the hearing, the technical issues that are appropriate to assure the public health and safety will also be addressed. In addition, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board has indicated that NRC should consider the psychological impact of future operation on the nearby communities. A copy of the Commission Order that outlines the issues to be considered is also enclosed for your information. The hearing is scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m., October 15, 1980, at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Hearing Room, 25 North Court Street (ground floor), Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

As for Unit 2, the licensee has not yet submitted to the NRC a proposal for overall plant recovery, although the licensee is conducting feasibility studies. It is not possible at this time to determine when such proposals for recovery may be submitted or how much time will be needed for the required reviews and approvals in connection with Unit 2's recovery. I would note, however, that the licensee's authority to operate Unit 2, except for those actions necessary to keep the reactor shut down, was suspended by Order of July 20, 1979.

The goal of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Management Program is to provide assurance that existing and future nuclear waste from military and civilian activities, including spent fuel from the once-through nuclear power cycle, can be isolated from the biosphere so as to pose no significant threat to public health and

Mrs. Kathy Herbein

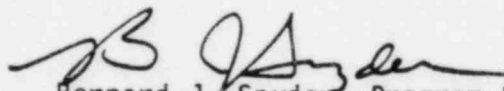
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safety and to the environment. The NRC is responsible for providing the framework of criteria and regulations that will ensure that the disposal methods developed for all types of radioactive waste are consistent with the achievement of this goal of safe, long-term waste disposal.

Regarding your desire for the NRC to phase out nuclear power plants, NRC's primary responsibility consists in the licensing, inspection, and enforcement of regulations for nuclear power plants in the interest of public health and safety and for the protection of the environment. Changes in NRC's regulatory responsibilities can stem from the public's will and the resulting Congressional action.

I appreciate your concerns and assure you that every effort is being made to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of the public, not only at Three Mile Island, but also at all nuclear power plants.

Sincerely,



Bernard J. Snyder, Program Director
Three Mile Island Program Office
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

- Enclosures:
1. NUREG-0662, vols. 1 & 2
 2. Order for Temporary Modification of License of June 12, 1980
 3. Memorandum and Order of June 12, 1980
 4. Summary of NUREG-0558
 5. Order and Notice of Hearing of August 9, 1979

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Dear Sir:

I am writing to say I do not want to go to Tent any of those Jasses, and that I do not want Unit one or Unit two to ever open up again.

I live 7 miles from TMI. I have 3 children, ages 4, 7, & 16 and I resent it that a J soul like that, takes the cheap, unsafe way of doing things, and not caring about my child's life. You can not put a price tag on a child's life.

I left ~~in~~ March for 12 days and went to my mother's 59 miles away.

Both Professor Sternglas and Kabir have said, the gods they (TMI) tell us that will not harm us, will get into the food, water, will stay around for 10 years, and will cause cancer,

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It will even go through a gas mask!!

There are at least 72 families that have moved away because of TMI, and I know of several friends, who are planning to do the same thing, especially if they vent those gasses and put ~~but~~ ^{unit} are on line again.

I know, I will leave for those 51 days whenever I get a date and will put my children into another school.

This is against human rights.

The people should definitely have a right to a public hearing before you give them permission to vent those gasses.

Think of our children and even yours, if the wind should blow your way. We are kids a doll - please, I have lived in Butterfield

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(10 miles from Hwy), for 17 years and I always loved it. But, if my husband got a transfer to a non-nuclear state, I would be packed in a dump, and, believe me, no one loves their home more than I do.

I have 147 signatures so far from people in my area, no votes + MI closed folder,

Even an National Guard will not come in and help. Blue, Ca, still has no evacuation plan.

I have written 19 letters, attended several meetings, went to a rally, made phone calls.

This involves my child's life & I will fight this tooth & nail.

+MI may have big oil corp. behind it, with lots of money - but this is the first time, they have tangled with mothers fighting for their children.

life.

we will unite and fight
and we will win !!

Another thing that bothers
me is, +Mi says they will tell
the public ahead of time, and also
will not vent those gasses until
Spring. But Kaker said, they
will do it in ~~the~~ ~~spring~~ Sept.
and will not tell us,

they not, I know I've been
told, need your permission. But,
they've been known to do things
without permission, or the other
"accident", cops, he didn't mean
to vent that - oh well, the
public will never know.

and when our children
develop cancer in 10 years, +Mi
will insist its from the radiation
of an colored TV set or the sun.

I hope when you are
considering giving them permission
to vent that gas or open back

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up, that you picture your child
a grandchild's face in your
mind. But yourself in an
place.

Please do not ~~wait~~ wait
until one of these plants kill
45,000 people and then decide
that it would be a good idea
to shut them down,

one how its just a
matter of time until one of these
plants has a meltdown,

another problem - where
are they going to put all of the
waste from these plants? there
are only 3 states that take the
waste, and eventually they will
not have room for it.

Instead of the govern-
ment spending thousands of dollars
to push that silver dollar, that
no one wants, let them apply
that money towards solar heat,
I am not alone in

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my feelings, there are many of us.
God willing, we will
win this battle.

Thank you. Please
give us a fair chance.

Sincerely yours,
Kathy Herbert (no
relation
to +711)

625 Carbon Ave,
Harrisburg, Pa,
17111

1-564-5589