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Midland, Michigan 48640
February 6, 1981



John Ahearne, Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20000

Dear John Ahearne:

Recently I attended the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Toronto.

One of the seminars that I attended, called "Health Risks Associated with Energy Technologies," included Dr. Reginald L. Gotchy of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. His topic was "Risk from Nuclear Power."

I was so incensed by the complete whitewash of the health risks of nuclear power that I am moved to write to you about it. One fission product of greatest concern is plutonium. Incredibly, Dr. Gotchy did not even mention the word.

Comparing radiation doses from Three Mile Island with what people get in Denver every day is also grossly misleading. Monitors are not going off scale in Denver as they did at Three Mile Island. No one is considering passing out vials of potassium iodide to block iodine-131 uptake in the thyroid as they did at Three Mile Island. Dr. Gotchy mentioned none of these facts--nor the fact that the Emergency Commission recommended people around every plant be given potassium iodide to take in case of accidental releases.

Dr. Gotchy's

In contrast to / misleading kind of information on a subject of utmost importance to the people of this country, I am sending you documentation that I have received from Dr. Gordon MacLeod and friends in Pennsylvania. Dr. MacLeod was director of public health of Pennsylvania when the Three Mile Island accident occurred, and was appointed only three weeks prior to the accident by Governor Thornburg for that office because of his exceptional qualification for the position.

Dr. MacLeod's attempts to do a responsible job of gathering and making public health data following that accident were repressed and he was forced to resign. He has pursued the problem of the serious deficiencies in public health care in relation to nuclear power. The address he gave before the Physicians for Social Responsibility at Columbia University on November 22, 1980 (enclosed), clearly describes those deficiencies and also analyzes the defects and cover-ups of the official position that the Dept. of Public Health of Pennsylvania has taken on the health data re-

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lated to Three Mile Island. He also points out how negligent the NRC has been in following up health effects data immediately following the accident which could have been an important source of data for better public health care following accidents.

The NRC is doing a grave disservice to the people of this country by sending out whitewash artists like Dr. Gotchy to discuss health risks of nuclear power. How can you believe you can get away with that type of presentation before a knowledgeable audience such as you have at AAAS meetings? The fact that the public at large is routinely given this type of information by NRC spokespersons sickens me. This is a major reason why the public distrusts the NRC and the nuclear industry--they increasingly are discovering from accidents and severe harm to people to what an extent members of the nuclear establishment are misrepresenting and have been misrepresenting to people the health risks of nuclear power for years.

Those of us who study the technical literature realize to what an extent the NRC is failing to act upon scientific medical information to protect the public as the NRC is charged to do.

Dr. MacLeod makes some definite and sensible suggestions for improving public health care in the area of nuclear power plants. I hope you will act on it.

While I am sending copies of this letter to all other commissioners of the NRC, I am not including all the enclosures. I hope that you will make those available to them.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Sinclair
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Encls.

Cc: Joseph Hendrie
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