CENTRAL ELECTRICITY GENERATING BOARD

Health and
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Honourable Joseph M. Hendrie,
Chairman,
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission,
WASHINGTON DC 20555,
USA.

Our ref HS/RRM Your ref Date 30 May 1979

Dear Dr. Hendrie,

I am writing to thank you very much indeed for the arrangements made by Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff during the visit of the UK team last week to study the Three Mile Island accident. We are particularly grateful to Mr. Lafleur and other staff at Bethesda for the very frank and open discussions held on 21 and 22 May, and again for the opportunity to visit Three Mile Island on 23 May.

I think you will know that the CEGB is actively pursuing the option of building a PWR in the UK, and at this current feasibility study stage my Chairman and Board Members felt it to be essential that we should obtain a first-hand appreciation of the underlying causes of the accident and the lessons to be learned. Last week's visit was extremely helpful and we feel reassured that the accident has not exposed any fundamental weakness of the PWR system, but rather that it escalated to severe core damage from a series of detail deficiencies which have been well described. The broader issues of co-ordination of offsite activities, the handling of public relations and evacuation of local communities and the problems of communication during the accident period have also provided valuable information for reviewing the effectiveness of our own emergency plans.

We shall plan to keep in close touch with NRC as reviews of procedures and legislation take place, and as results of the various inquiries become available. Dr. Gaunt has kept us very well up-dated with NRC publications, and has undertaken to provide us with all future relevant reports and documents.

Once again many thanks to you and NRC staff for a very interesting and useful visit.

With best regards.

Yours sincerely,

Roy R. Matthews

R. R. MATTHEWS

Copies to:
Mr. J. D. Lafleur Jr - NRC
Dr. J. Gaunt - British Embassy

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