Wendell H. Marshall Mapleton Intevenors Route 10 Midland, Michigan 48640

December 14, 1982

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission The Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation Washington, D.C. 20555

ATTN: Director

Dear Mr. Director:

The director of reactor safety, Roger Mattson, testifying before the Presidential Commission on TMI, stated that the Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant was exempt from NRC's 1975 safety rules and regulations. The 1975 rules require that new plants increase from one to three the number of conditions under which the containment building which houses the reactor would automatically be sealed shut and airtight in the event of an accident.

Mr. Mattson admitted under questioning that the decision not to require conformance to the 1975 safety rules and regulations for nuclear plants already operating or under construction was a question of practicability. Because of the non-conformance to the NRC safety rules the TMI containment failed to automatically seal shut for about five hours. This allowed release of large quantities of radioactive gases into the environment; which would not have happened if the doors which seal automatically, sealed shut.

The chairman of the President's TMI Commission said he did not understand how any nuclear plant could be exempt from making modifications which would significantly improve critically important safety matters. Matters that affect the health and safety and general welfare of the public and in the case of Midland, it is very important because of the location of the plant within the city itself.

In view of the above statements, please provide the Mapleton Intevenors with the following information.

- Has NRC allowed an exemption from 1975 safety rules for Midland?
- 2. If the answer to #1 is no, when will Midland be brought into compliance with NRC's 1975 safety rules and regulations?

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- 3. Will Midland's plant containment building shut automatically and become airtight in the event of an accident to prevent radioactive releases upon the people of Midland?
- 4. If the answers to #3 are yes, then under what conditions does this apply in the event of an accident at Midland?
- 5. What is the time interval between an accident and the automatic closing of containment to seal shut and air-tight condition for the plant at Midland?

It appears to me that our problems increase with an unstable technology regardless of the answers to the above questions. A technology that is unable to protect the public health and safety and has no solution to the radioactive waste problem. It is imperitive that all safeguards be employed at nuclear plants. At least some future diseases may be prevented. Thank you for answering the above.

Sincerely,

ndelle F. Marshall

Wendell H. Marshall President - Mapleton Intevenors

WHM/cg