

No. 9

Date 3/27/79

NRC, SECRETARY/PA/PR

TO ☐ Commissioner

XXXXX Exec. Dir./Opert.

☐ Cong. Liaison☐ Public Affairs☐

Date

☐ Gen. Counsel☐ Solicitor☐ Secretary

Incoming: Abraham Goldin

From: 1505 Columbia Avenue

Rockville, Md. 20850

To: Chairman Hendree

Date 3/19/79

Subject: Comments on shutdown of five reactors
for seismic related issues☐ Prepare reply for signature of:☐ Chairman☐ Commissioner☐ EDO, GC, CL, SOL, PA, SECY☐ Signature block omitted☐☐ Return original of incoming with response☐ For direct reply*

XXXXX For appropriate action

☐ For information☐ For recommendation

Remarks:

For the Commission: Combs

*Send three (3) copies of reply to Secy Mail Facility

NRC 62

ACTION SLIP

7906230056

1505 Columbia Avenue
Rockville, MD, 20850
March 19, 1979

Dr. Joseph M. Hendrie, Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington DC 20555

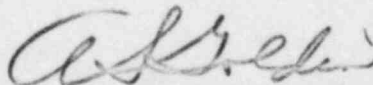
Dear Chairman Hendrie,

I was shocked at the Commission's order closing five nuclear plants for errors in the calculation of earthquake resistance in piping. This order imposes a burden of some hundreds of millions of dollars, which will probably have to be borne by the consumers. In addition it makes necessary the replacement of this power by other generating equipment, much of which is oil-fired. In the Northeast where these plants are located, much of the replacement oil will be imported. The Commission's order contributes substantially to inflation, to the oil shortage, and to our balance of payments deficit, all at the expense of the consumer.

If the Commission's order had related in a reasonable manner to the actual risks involved, no one could object. But to impose such a burden on the basis of the risk of a major earthquake in Maine, or Pennsylvania, in New York, or in Virginia, in the next few weeks, or months, is absurd. It may well be that the risk of such an earthquake occurring in the 40-year life of a reactor is worth protecting against; betting the consumer's money that it will occur in three months is ridiculous. This kind of blind insensitivity to reality gives regulation a bad name.

I hope that the Commission will develop the judgment to balance the risks and costs of nuclear plant operation, taking into account the very small likelihood of some of the situations involved. Rescinding the shut-down order pending an orderly assessment of the hazards would be the first step in demonstrating this judgment capability. Shutting down only those plants which present a hazard pending repair would be the second.

Sincerely,



Abraham S. Goldin

cc: Secretary Schlesinger
President Carter