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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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February 5, 1988

THREE EMPIRE STATE PLAZA  
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PERSONAL

SERVED MAR 15 1988

Mr. Lando W. Zech, Jr., Chairman  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
1717 H Street  
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Zech:

I write as a member of the New York State Public Service Commission, which is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the utilities of our state provide adequate and safe amounts of energy to our citizens at reasonable cost.

There is presently a crisis concerning the inadequacy of the electric energy supply to the 2.5 million people who live on the Long Island portion of the State of New York. This is served by the Long Island Lighting Company, as you well know. That crisis would be immediately abated if the 800 MW Shoreham nuclear power plant received an operating license from the NRC.

A failure to obtain a license for Shoreham may also precipitate a cost crisis to the LILCO ratepayers. If Shoreham is not licensed, they will not only have to pay for alternative forms of energy but for the costs LILCO reasonably incurred in the construction of Shoreham as well! Even without Shoreham costs, electric rates would have to be increased to provide needed electrical energy.

I am thus urging that the NRC take any and all steps necessary to obtain the immediate licensing of the Shoreham facility. I say this knowing of all the litigation, the procedural obstacles, as well as the public opposition you have been confronted with. So I realize the task will not be easy. But I urge upon you that it is very necessary.

It is hoped that the NRC will find that the recently published findings of a licensing board concerning a now over two-year old evacuation plan is stale and untimely and should be rejected out of hand.

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I suggest for your consideration that it is simply an unfounded and unreasonable conclusion that a company which can operate a major utility in the metropolitan area of New York cannot establish an appropriate emergency communications mechanism, staffed by trained people, within a reasonable period of time.

Perhaps the proceedings should be reopened and the petitioner permitted to establish for the record its efforts and activity over the intervening time since the 1986 evacuation plan test relative to the preparation and training of utility communication staff. If that is the issue, maybe the NRC should focus its attention specifically on that point.

Hopefully there will be no need to have another evacuation drill prior to a decision to authorize a 25% operating license. Even that would be a big help this summer.

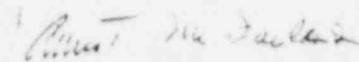
As I see it, if the NRC accepts the finding of the licensing board and accepts it as a reason to further delay licensing this facility, it will be like issuing an open invitation to every local official to block nuclear power in this country for purely political reasons!

If there any possibility that the NRC has the authority under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to have the federal government participate in an evacuation plan? If safety of the public is involved, why not? Or maybe the Federal Disaster Preparedness Board, or how about the President ordering the National Guard to do it! What could the New York officials do about that?

As you can see, I believe it is necessary for the energy safety of Long Island that Shoreham be licensed. The 10 mile rule is probably too restrictive. Maybe it can be finessed somehow. Perhaps by dividing it into two 5 mile zones, with only the inner 5 miles needing a plan now and a plan for the other 5 miles developed later.

Please keep trying. And thanks for all your efforts.

Yours truly,

  
James T. McFarland

JTM/bj