



OFFICE OF THE
COMMISSIONER

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

November 2, 1981

Mr. & Mrs. William Townsend
1759 Marco Place
Camarillo, CA 93010

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Townsend:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding Diablo Canyon. The recent Commission decision authorizing low-power testing and fuel loading is only the first step in Commission review of this plant. Specifically, the earthquake-related issues that distinguish Diablo Canyon from most other nuclear units have not yet been addressed in detail by the Commission. They will be reviewed before operation above five percent power is authorized.

While it may have some symbolic importance, a decision to authorize low-power testing poses very little danger to the public. The power level is so low that the operators have more than ample time to react to any problems in the plant, and the amount of radioactivity existing in the core does not begin to build up until the plant has operated for quite a while.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Bradford
Commissioner

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