



CHAIRMAN

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

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September 16, 1988

The Honorable Joseph Rhodes, Jr., Commissioner
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105

Dear Commissioner Rhodes:

I am responding to your letters of August 16 and September 13, 1988, in which you questioned the basis for the Commission's recent decision to impose civil penalties on the Philadelphia Electric Company (PECo) and some of its employees and the manner in which the Commission has exercised its regulatory oversight responsibility for the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station. In light of the volume and detail of information which you have requested, I am sure you can appreciate that it is taking the NRC staff some time to assemble this material.

As you recognize in your letter, the civil penalty imposed on Philadelphia Electric was the largest ever for a utility licensee. Also, as you have noted, for the first time the Commission took the step of fining individual licensed reactor operators, which is another indication of the seriousness with which this Commission views its regulatory responsibilities.

I can assure that the Commission has neither "cleared the way" for the restart of the Peach Bottom facility through the NRC's action of imposing civil penalties, nor have we conducted our oversight of the restart effort in secret. On the contrary, the NRC is expending considerable effort to ensure that the public's health and safety will be adequately protected prior to any decision by the Commission on the restart of the Peach Bottom units.

We expect to complete development of the information which you have requested in your letters and Freedom of Information Request in the very near term.

Sincerely,

Lando W. Zech Jr.
Lando W. Zech, Jr.

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