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GOVERNOR

STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

COLUMBUS 43266-0601

May 7, 1986

Mr. Nunzio Palladino
Chairman
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Chairman Palladino:

The tragic accident at the Chernobyl nuclear facility is a profound reminder of the need for a renewed commitment to achieving a high level of nuclear safety in the United States.

In the aftermath of this disaster, I am writing to express my concerns about the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's poor record of enforcing high safety standards in Ohio. While no life-threatening accident has occurred at the Davis-Besse Power Plant, and the Perry Nuclear Facility has not begun to operate, the NRC's record demonstrates a need for increased attention to safety.

The Davis-Besse Plant offers a disturbing example of the NRC's inattention to safety and its inability to regulate the nuclear power industry. Although the plant has been plagued with design, management and operation problems since the day it began, earning it the reputation as one of the most unreliable facilities in the nation, the NRC has had little success in improving its operation.

The most recent incident at Davis-Besse, which occurred on June 9, 1985, was also the most serious, involving the severe problems with both the primary and auxiliary cooling systems. This took place after a long history of problems with the emergency cooling systems-- years during which the NRC was unable to persuade Davis-Besse to install the emergency cooling pump shown to be needed by the Three Mile Island accident in 1979.

Because of the history of problems at Davis-Besse and the seriousness of the most recent incident, I urge you and Toledo Edison to let the public know what you are doing to strengthen safety standards before Davis-Besse restarts.

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PDR COMMS NRCC
CORRESPONDENCE PDR

The NRC's reaction to concerns raised about Perry's ability to withstand an earthquake are as disturbing as its inability to improve safety at Davis-Besse.

I agree with Senators Glenn and Metzenbaum and Representatives Seiberling and Eckart on the need for a more thorough investigation. Because of the severity of the January 31, 1986, earthquake and the proximity of the earthquake's epicenter to the Perry facility, a complete investigation, including an opportunity for full public participation in an exploratory hearing, is warranted.

In its decision to deny the Atomic Safety and Licensing Appeals Board's desire for an exploratory hearing, the NRC summarily refused to entertain the idea of gathering additional information that could have allowed a more informed judgment about the safety significance of the earthquake.

This decision was not in the best interests of Ohioans. Completing the hearing process the Appeals Board suggested should not necessarily cause a delay in starting Perry. If it brought new evidence to light, the hearing could help prevent a future problem; if no new evidence surfaced, and it was determined that the earthquake did not pose a potential future safety hazard, public confidence in the facility would have been restored.

I request that you reconsider your decision and more fully consider whether the earthquake presents a significant safety issue.

With Perry and Davis-Besse both preparing to begin operations, I hope that the NRC will make the safety of Ohioans its top priority.

Sincerely,

Richard F. Celeste

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Governor