



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
HARRISBURG

THE GOVERNOR

June 22, 1979

The Honorable Joseph M. Hendrie
Chairman
United States Nuclear Regulatory
Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

It has come to my attention through recent press accounts that officials of the General Public Utilities Corporation, parent company of Metropolitan Edison Company, intend to seek permission to resume operation of Unit 1 of the Three Mile Island nuclear facility near Piletown, Pa.

Although you indicated in your May 25 letter to me that there are no plans to reactivate Unit 1 in the near future, I understand from these accounts and from our own Commonwealth officials that informal discussions of this prospect have already commenced.

Mr. Chairman, I must express my deep concerns over this matter -- concerns that were heightened yesterday when the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) reported discovering on June 20 a crack in an emergency cooling water pipe in Unit 1.

As Governor, I have a deeply felt responsibility for both the physical and psychological security of the citizens of this Commonwealth. Therefore, I am advising you of my strong opposition to any plans to reactivate Unit 1 until a number of very serious issues have been resolved.

Specifically, I urge you to effect the indefinite postponement of consideration of any such request, formal or otherwise, until I, as Governor, have been satisfied that:

*The President's Commission on Three Mile Island and other official investigations into the causes of the accident have been fully completed and their findings fully disclosed.

*The Babcock & Wilcox reactor design flaws which may have contributed to the accident in Unit 2 have been fully discovered and corrected in Unit 1.

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*Allegations of human errors in the accident have been resolved; and that training of operating and management personnel has been upgraded, in recognition of the fact that the same set of operating technicians who manned Unit 2 may be manning Unit 1.

*Questions about the wisdom and safety of operating Unit 1 next to the severely crippled Unit 2 (containing lethal levels of radioactivity in the containment) have been answered.

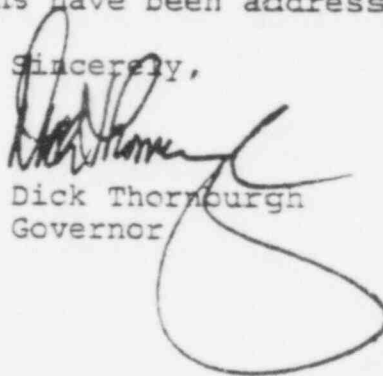
*The psychological health of Central Pennsylvania's residents, who have already been subjected to an unprecedented trauma, won't be adversely affected by the reopening.

To this end, I have directed the Pennsylvania Department of Justice to be prepared to petition, under NRC rules, for a suspension of Metropolitan Edison's license to operate Unit 1, and to be prepared as well to take whatever legal actions may be necessary to prevent the reactivation of Unit 1.

I am not unmindful of the considerable costs which are being incurred by the utility in the purchase of replacement power due to the inactive state of Unit 1. However, I believe that the considerations of human safety and security which I have expressed must at this time transcend those of economic costs to the utility.

It is my sincere hope that these courses of action will not be made necessary. Again, I ask you to use whatever authority you may possess to delay consideration of any request to re-activate Unit 1 until these concerns have been addressed.

Sincerely,


Dick Thornburgh
Governor

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