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CLERMONT COUNTY
CHAMBER of COMMERCE
174 MAIN ST., BATAVIA, OHIO 45103
PHONE (513) 732-0133

May 10, 1979

Mr. Charles Bechhoefer, Chairman
Atomic Safety & Licensing Board
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Bechhoefer:

I am writing to you to formally request a limited appearance at the hearing scheduled for May 24, 1979 in Moscow, Ohio regarding the Zimmer Nuclear Power Plant Licensure.

As President of the Clermont County Chamber of Commerce, whose membership takes in a vast majority of the commerce and industry in the very area which the Zimmer Plant is scheduled to serve if it begins operation in mid 1980. It is the concensus of the Directors of the Chamber that your Board permit the Zimmer Plant its required license to operate.

We feel that the primary reason for delaying the Zimmer Plant opening is the recent well published accident at Three Mile Island. We are concerned that Three Mile Island should have such an impact in our area, since it is our understanding that there is no similarity between the two plants, the designs supposedly being entirely different. Comparatively speaking the safety record for nuclear energy has been very good. Since the first plant was put into operation some twenty years ago, to our knowledge not one death can be attributed to a nuclear accident. When this is compared to the near two billion dollars that the nation has apparently saved by using nuclear energy as opposed to importing oil, one cannot help but question why such technology has been stifled by fear, misunderstanding, and regulation. An economy which is totally dependent upon imported oil is shakey indeed. a nation that has such an economy is weak and vulnerable. Coal, which at one point in time had been the administrations answer to the oil import problem, does not seem to have quite caught on. Perhaps it is the destruction connected to strip mining, or it may be the polutents produced by the use of coal as a fuel.

We understand the Ford Foundation recently sponsored a study that shows that a new coal fired plant which meets all current environmental standards produces an estimate of two - twenty five fatalities per year.

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We have yet to take into consideration the well publicized "Green House Effect", which therorizes that the carbon dioxide pouring into the air by burning coal could form a shield in the atmosphere which would keep heat from escaping. We understand scientist speculate that such a phenomena would increase the earths temperature causing such interesting consequences as the melting of the polar ice cap, and the subsequent flooding of th costal lands of the earth.

Gentlemen, we on the Clermont County Chamber of Commerce Board feel that the time has come when this country, especially our government, is going to have to make a decision. We have all heard the tale, "you can't have your cake and eat it too." We propose that this is exactly what the Federal Government would like at this point in time.

We currently have three major sources of energy producing fuels: import oil, coal, and nuclear energy. We think a decision must be made by someone as to precisely what is to be used so that this country can continue to maintain the standard of living to which its citizens are accustomed. We do not live, nor have we ever lived, in a total risk free world. We are constantly making decisions on a daily basis which will effect us in the way we will or will not live in the future.

Given the facts that have just be reviewed, it would seem practical at this time to pursue the use of a nuclear power facility. We in the United States are no longer economically independent of the rest of the world. The effect of the dollar on our day to day standards of living is felt constantly. It is not only businesses that are now competing among themselves but nations. It is not only businesses that seek a larger share of the market but nations that seek a more improved balance of trade. Our competitive allies are using nuclear energy to support their economies. The communist countries are also heavily involved in nuclear energy.

Gentlemen, the Clermont County Chamber of Commerce strongly urges you to get down to the business of truly understanding not only what you are regulating but your purpose for regulating it. You cannot just zero in on nuclear energy because you are the Nuclear Regulatory Commussion. You must take into consideration how your decisions would directly affect the use of nuclear material and indirectly affect the entire country. We feel only then can you truly regulate.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Ruthemeyer

Thomas J. Ruthemeyer
President

TJR/slw

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