

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

March 3, 1993

Mr. Ivan Selin
Chairman
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Selin:

We are writing to urge the Commission to reconsider nuclear power plant security requirements in light of the February 7, 1993 incident at the Three Mile Island reactor where an intruder drove his car into the plant's protected area and hid for about four hours before he was found. This incident raises serious questions about the adequacy of power reactor security in the United States.

The recent incident at TMI appears to confirm many of the past concerns of the Congress regarding nuclear power plant security. In 1988, the Subcommittee on General Oversight and Investigations, chaired by Representative Sam Gejdenson, held a hearing which focused on the fact that NRC security regulations assume that plant intruders do not have a motor vehicle. The same regulations remain in force today. Consequently, power reactors are not required to have vehicle barriers to prevent intruders from driving right into the middle of a reactor complex, which is precisely what occurred at Three Mile Island.

At the 1988 hearing, Representative Gejdenson strongly criticized the failure of the NRC security regulations to require protections against intrusions by motor vehicles. Nevertheless, the Commission, then headed by Chairman Lando Zech, Jr., refused to consider any changes in this security regulation or even engage in a constructive dialogue on the issue. A few years earlier, in 1986, the Commission by a vote of 3-2, rejected a proposal to require vehicle barriers at power reactors, which the NRC staff then estimated would cost between \$100,000 and \$200,000 to install at each facility.

Surprisingly, the Nuclear Management and Resources Council, a nuclear industry consortium, wrote the NRC in late 1992 to recommend that security regulations relating to plant intruders be relaxed. The recent incident at TMI indicates that this industry recommendation is imprudent and we recommend that the Commission reject the industry proposal. Furthermore, we

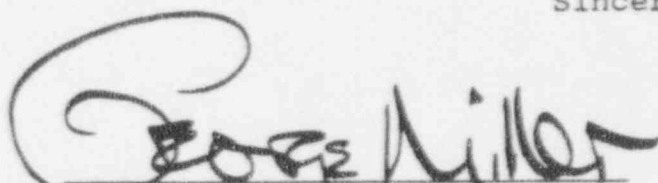
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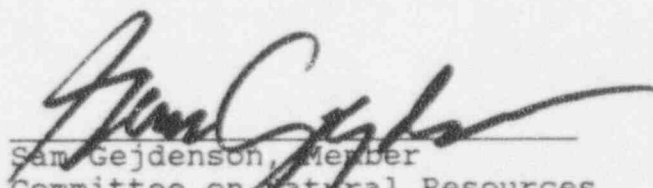
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strongly urge the Commission to consider strengthening NRC security regulations through requiring the installation of vehicle barriers at commercial power reactors.

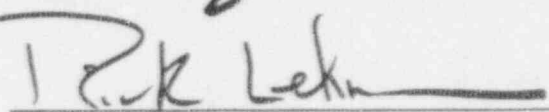
Thank you for your consideration.

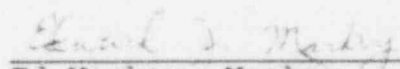
Sincerely,


George Miller, Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources


Sam Gejdenson, Member
Committee on Natural Resources


Phil Sharp, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce


Rick Lehman, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and
Mineral Resources
Committee on Natural Resources


Ed Markey, Member
Committee on Natural Resources
Committee on Energy and Commerce

cc: Commissioners Rogers, Curtiss, Remick, dePlanque