

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

December 8, 1983

The Honorable Nunzio J. Palladino
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am very much concerned by the report that the staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has recommended that Three Mile Island Unit 1 be authorized to operate at 25% power with commencement as early as January 1984. Any such action would be unjustified and contrary to appropriate assurances to safety which the public has a right to expect.

That authorization would contradict assurances which I have received from the Commission's General Counsel who responded on November 23, 1983 to my earlier letters stating that "The Commission intends to assure the questions about GPU's management competence and integrity are adequately resolved prior to making a decision on restart."

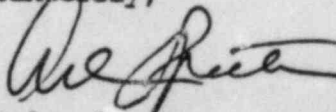
As you know, I had written on July 29 and November 17, 1983, urging that the Commission give assurances that there be no restart of TMI-1 until the record was reopened and adjudicatory hearings held on unresolved management issues, including the Hartman allegations and other issues enumerated in NUREG 1020, the material false statements concerning operator cheating, and General Public Utilities' failure to adhere to NRC quality assurance requirements in the course of the clean-up of TMI-2.

In the absence of hearings on this state of the record and in light of the recent indictment of Met Ed for criminal misconduct in its operation of TMI, as well as the more than seven ongoing investigations by the NRC Office of Investigations into TMI management integrity issues, how can the Commission even consider authorizing the restart of TMI Unit 1 with so many unresolved questions about the integrity and competency of the corporate managers?

I am also very much concerned about the operation of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission itself on this important matter. These issues have been pending for a protracted period of time and really should have been resolved long ago. From all points of view, including management at GPU, there should be a completion of the investigation so that wrongdoing would be exposed or exoneration would be presented, whatever is warranted by the facts. I have been involved in many complex investigations and know that these matters can be concluded at a much faster pace. Would you please let me know when you anticipate concluding the inquiries on the issues raised?

The accident and its aftermath have caused great erosion of public confidence in the NRC as well as GPU. This confidence can be restored and doubts surrounding GPU management competence and integrity resolved only through evidentiary hearings. These hearings must be held promptly before a decision on restart is considered.

Sincerely,


Arlen Specter

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