

504 S. Wall, Apt. 228
Carbondale, IL 62901
March 21, 1981

Senator Alan Dixon
Room 456
Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Dixon:

This is to express my dissatisfaction with some rule changes proposed for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Both these rules seem designed to bypass public hearings on whether certain nuclear plants can be built.

In the first case, the NRC is proposing a removal of the public's right of discovery. By this measure, any public interest group opposed to the licensing & construction of a nuclear power plant has access to information about the plant, and can use this information to argue a case against the plant. The elimination of right of discovery in effect would bypass the public will by denying the public information on which to prepare a case.

While that proposal disenfranchises the public in effect, we would be disenfranchised in reality by the second proposal: a rule that would permit nuclear power plants to begin operating before a license has been granted. This in itself is bad enough--if this rule is adopted, we might as well not arrest anyone who drives or hunts without a license--and it is a slap in the face of the rule of law. Taken with the other proposal, it speaks of a willingness on the part of the current administration to govern by fiat, rather than by consultation with the governed.

Mr. Reagan's advocacy of nuclear power is well-known; what is not well-known, especially in light of the Three Mile Island incident and other lesser accidents, is whether nuclear power is as safe as its proponents claim. The proposed rule change would seem to want to settle the issue without examining the evidence. It would be an unconscionable move, and I ask you and your colleagues to speak out and vote against this proposal. It's an insidious trend, short-circuiting government via the consent of the governed. This is a principle which no administration should turn its back on, however big its "mandate".

Yours,

Patrick Drazen
Patrick Drazen

POOR ORIGINAL

8106050067