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JUN 11 1981

NOTE TO:: Chairman Hendrie
Commissioner Gilinsky
Commissioner Bradford
Commissioner Ahearne
William J. Dircks
Harold R. Denton
John Davis

SUBJECT: DOE COMMITMENT TO TAKE TMI-2 HIGH SPECIFIC ACTIVITY WASTES FOR THEIR
R&D PROGRAMS

In a recent meeting I had with Herb Feinroth, I suggested that DOE give us a commitment to take offsite and retain all of the high specific activity wastes from operations of the Submerged Demineralizer System (SDS), consistent with DOE's testimony to their Congressional authorization committee earlier this year. Attached is a copy of the DOE letter which I just received. DOE indicates they will utilize all of the high activity zeolites in their research, development and testing (RDT) programs. Of course, Congressional approval of their RDT programs is still required.

We will ensure that the other wastes to be generated in cleaning up the TMI-2 reactor sump water and reactor coolant system water using the SDS will be suitable for disposal in a commercial low level land burial facility.

Since we now have basically resolved all the solid waste disposition issues for SDS, I believe the public concerns regarding operation of SDS at TMI-2 should be minimized.

Staff review of the licensee's proposal for SDS is nearly completed and the activities and impacts are within the scope of these already assessed in the PEIS. I plan to provide the Commission an information paper soon, at least a week before staff action is taken.

Bernard J. Snyder, Program Director
TMI Program Office
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure: As Stated

cc: L. Bickwitt
D. Rathbun

bcc: S. Elperin, E. Case, L. Barrett, R. Browning/H. Lowenberg

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BJSnyder:med
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Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20545

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JUN 3 1981

Dr. Bernard Snyder, Director
TMI Project Office
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555


Dear Dr. Snyder:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify our position with regard to research and development on the waste products that will result from the operation of the Submerged Demineralizer System (SDS) at Three Mile Island. The Department of Energy has proposed a waste immobilization research and development program in the fiscal year 1982 funding request to Congress. To implement this research and development program, the Department of Energy will acquire the SDS waste products that will contain approximately 500,000 curies of radioactivity currently dispersed in the reactor building sump and primary coolant system. The General Public Utility Company currently estimates that this dispersed radioactivity may be deposited on 15 to 20 zeolite liners.

The waste immobilization research and development program will include vitrification in addition to other promising approaches. Each experiment will be followed by confidence testing and an extended observation period. We are also considering utilizing some of these immobilized waste products in various research, development, and testing programs. The Department of Energy does not plan to return these products to the Three Mile Island site.

We hope this clarification is of interest and we will continue to keep you abreast of developments in the waste immobilization research and development program. If you have any questions, please contact me on 353-5006.

Sincerely,


Franklin E. Coffman, Acting Director
Office of Coordination and
Special Projects
Office of Nuclear Energy

cc:
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