

David C. Lyons, M.D.

SURGERY OF THE HAND

8404 SHADOW ROAD

CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815

(301) 856-1866

301-229-0602

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Landon Zech  
Commissioner  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington D.C. 20555

10 September 1985

Dear Commissioner Zech,

Please do something to relieve the deadlock that has developed around the licensing of LILCO's Shoreham plant. This situation is creating a very damaging precedent for the regulation of nuclear energy in our country.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, and the Federal Emergency Management Administration are staffed by highly trained technicians, engineers, and physicists. These commissions are ordained by the Congress of the United States to regulate and supervise the development of nuclear energy in this country. But what has happened in Suffolk County, New York, is the turning topsy turvy of the authority structure. Now local untrained politicians are making the decisions they are not equipped to make. By requiring an actual evacuation drill the lowest level of government has the greatest and final power with it's potential veto. Great sums of money, man power, time, and emotional energy can not be spent on these vast projects, which then will be used or thrown away on the whim of some unqualified local people. Our country can not progress into the 21st century with this type of decision making process. Please do not permit decisions to be based on irrational fears and superstition.

Local politicians can not support a nuclear plant because they might lose some votes, and elections are usually won by narrow percentage margins. They need to be rescued from their dilemma. The Federal Government needs to change the rules it set up. If an actual evacuation drill is too difficult or too politically threatening to run, then experts at FEMA should determine if the evacuation plan is feasible. This determination could then be used to break the gridlock for everyone involved. FEMA has plans for areas of the country damaged by nuclear warfare and there are plans for the evacuation of Long Island in case of a hurricane, but none of these has had to go through public drills.

Please do not let the local politicians of Suffolk County turn the power structure of our country upside down.

Please do not let the Shoreham plant become a precedent that caused the ruination of an orderly development of electrical energy supply for our country.

Sincerely,

*David C. Lyons M.D.*

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