

TERA



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

JAN 8 1980

Ms. Dana Olan
418 Old Courthouse Rd.
Hanhasset Hills, NY 11040

Dear Dana:

I am writing in response to your letter to President Carter regarding the incident at Three Mile Island. I regret that this answer to your letter has been delayed. The accident and its consequences have created a substantial increase in the agency's workload, which has prevented us from responding to you as promptly as we would have liked to.

Regarding your question about the possibility of the Three Mile Island Plant blowing up, there was no possibility of a nuclear explosion such as that which happens in a bomb. Furthermore, you may be assured that there is no possibility of such an explosion occurring in a nuclear power plant accident. For a few days after the accident there was some concern that a hydrogen bubble which was present in the reactor vessel might react explosively with the oxygen which was thought to be slowly accumulating in the bubble. There was concern that such a chemical explosion might allow escape of large amounts of radioactive materials. However, after further discussion and consultation with experts it was realized that such an explosion could not occur as essentially no oxygen would accumulate in the bubble so it is not true that the plant was going to blow up.

We appreciate your concerns and assure you that every effort is being made to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of the public, not only at the Three Mile Island Station, but also at all nuclear power plants.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Harold R. Denton", is written over the typed name.

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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Dana Olan
418 Old Courthouse
Manhasset Hills, N.Y.
11040

President Jimmy Carter
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington D.C.

Dear President Carter,

I'm a 7th grade student
in the Shelter Roc Junior High School.
Every night we hear on the news
about the nuclear power plant in
Harrisburg P.A. I really don't under-
stand what's happening. Some people
say it's going to ~~explode~~ and some-
thing really bad is going to happen.
Could you try to write back to me
and tell me exactly what will or
may happen and when? And please
tell me when and why it may
happen?

Thank you very much.
Sincerely yours,
Dana Olan

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