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Honorable Joseph Hendrie
 Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I regret that the Commission as a body has not been able to address the question of the Executive Director's testimony with the forthrightness and candor expressed by Commissioner Gilinsky in his November 16 letter on the subject. To me the Commission's handling of the matter has from the beginning, some 13 months ago, demonstrated an unacceptable insensitivity to the necessity of establishing and maintaining a high level of public confidence in the integrity of the nuclear regulatory process.

I am of course aware of the difficult nature of this particular situation. But it was the recognition, that problems such as this would arise, that led Congress to establish the NRC as an independent regulatory commission. Until such time that the Commission is able to demonstrate that it can and will make hard and painful choices, nuclear power may be prevented from fully assuming the role that it might otherwise play in the national economy.

Sincerely,

M. K. Udall
 MORRIS K. UDALL
 Chairman