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The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

April 18, 1990

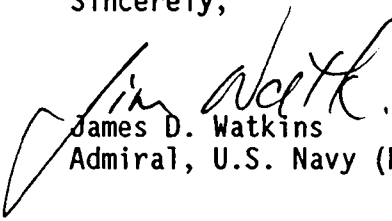
Mr. John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
600 E Street, N.W.-Suite 675
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As I implied in the memorandum I forwarded to you on March 13, I agree with the Board that the adequacy of existing Department of Energy (DOE) standards, as interpreted and applied at the DOE defense nuclear facilities, is in need of a thorough review. Partly for the reasons cited by the Board in its March 8 letter to me (the apparent lack of specificity, uniformity, and varied applicability of the DOE Orders), and partly because of the amount and nature of the information needed to comply with the Board's recommendations, the Department is unable at this time to provide a comprehensive response. Enclosed is a memorandum from Defense Programs and the Office of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management requesting from the appropriate field offices some of the information that will be needed to provide a coordinated response to the Board's recommendations. In the meantime, I am writing to formally request, pursuant to the provisions of 42 U.S.C. 2286d, a 45-day extension beyond the prescribed date for publishing DOE's response to the Board's recommendations of March 8 in the Federal Register.

As you know, I recently formed a Task Force within the Department to review DOE's nuclear safety related directives in order to identify those basic safety requirements which ought to be issued as regulations through notice-and-comment rulemaking. While the work of the Task Force will not be completed in the next 90 days, it should be far enough along by then to provide another portion of the information that we require to be fully responsive to the significant and complex issues the Board has raised.

Sincerely,


James D. Watkins
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)

Enclosure

cc: V. Stello, DP-2
L. Duffy, EM-1
S. Blush, NS-1

DNF SAFETY BOARD

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