



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20350

31 August 1979

Dr. Joseph M. Hendrie  
Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
1717 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Dr. Hendrie:

I am writing you to express my deep concern over a subject that has serious national security implications.

I was advised that at a meeting called by the Commission on August 1, 1979, and attended by representatives of nearly all public utilities licensed to operate nuclear generating plants, an official of the Commission, Dr. Mattson, discussed the need for them to obtain qualified people. According to accounts by those present, Dr. Mattson stated that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission felt strongly that technical advisors holding Bachelor of Science degrees were needed to be present in commercial reactor plant control rooms. He further stated very clearly, I am told, that Navy nuclear trained officers were a good source for these positions and that industry should be prepared to pay \$50,000 per year to obtain them.

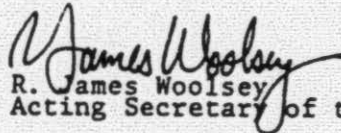
I felt sufficiently strongly about this matter that I called one of your Commissioners, John Ahearne, whom I've known for some years. I understand from that call that Dr. Mattson was giving a briefing on lessons learned from the Three Mile Island incident and that any views he may have expressed on using the Navy as a source of trained personnel were strictly his own and not the Commission's.

I know that you and knowledgeable officials of your Commission are aware of the serious problem the Navy continues to face in retaining enough qualified officers to man our nuclear powered ships. We have taken extraordinary measures to help relieve this problem, including special legislative assistance. Even though I trust it is not NRC policy to encourage utilities to try to bid such officers away from the Navy, I am concerned that an official of your agency has taken the position at an official meeting with industry representatives that the Navy should be a major source of these technical advisors.

Such statements can only exacerbate the Navy's problem. We must accept the reality that we will lose a certain number of these highly qualified people to private industry. However, we should not have to face the additional problem of employees of another federal agency working against us in official forums.

I respectfully request that you advise Dr. Mattson and other NRC employees that they should not officially and publicly take the position that industry should look to the Navy as a source of qualified technical advisors. Indeed, we would appreciate it if industry could be discouraged from making such overtures.

If, in order for such steps to be taken, it would be useful for us to meet, I would be pleased to come see you to discuss the Navy's position in this matter.

  
R. James Woolsey  
Acting Secretary of the Navy