

Greenpeace letter to U.S Nuclear Regulatory Commission, January 27, 2004

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Commissioner Edward McGaffigan, Jr.
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Commissioner McGaffigan,

Since the Bush Administration is busy "clarifying" the inaccuracies contained in last year's State of the Union Address concerning things nuclear, I thought it would be appropriate to get some clarification on another nuclear issue in the President's speech.

We now know that the President's claims about Iraqi attempts to purchase yellow cake uranium from Africa were at best inaccurate. I have it from an extremely reliable source that the President's assertion that Al Qaeda had diagrams of U.S. nuclear power plants was also without merit.

According to President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address:

We have found diagrams of American nuclear power plants and public water facilities, detailed instructions for making chemical weapons, surveillance maps of American cities, and thorough descriptions of landmarks in America and throughout the world.

When one of the Senators used this quote in a closed-door session of the Senate on nuclear security, I am told that you corrected him. You actually told my colleague that "Mr. Bush's speech writers got a little carried away with that one" and that "there were no U.S. nuclear plant designs discovered in Afghanistan."

If you know this to be true, I believe that you have an obligation both to the public and the industry you serve to set the record straight. You have, in the past, made assertions concerning the accuracy of the information used by public interest organizations such as Greenpeace. In the interest of accuracy, I ask that you address these assertions. Since the NRC has prohibited the Nuclear Security and Incident Response branch from communicating with the public, this correspondence is the public's only avenue to get clarification of this most important issue.

Sincerely,

James P. Riccio
Nuclear Policy Analyst
Greenpeace

CC:

Senator Jeff Bingaman

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Senator Jeff Bingaman

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton

Senator Harry Reid

Senator John D. Rockefeller

Representative Peter Deusch,

Representative James Greenwood

Representative Sue W. Kelly

Representative Henry A. Waxman,

Tom Ridge, Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Chairman Nils Diaz,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Commissioner Jeffrey S. Merrifield,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

George A. Mulley Jr., Office of the Inspector General,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Roy Zimmerman, Nuclear Security and Incident Response,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Glenn Tracy, Nuclear Security and Incident Response,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission