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THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

June 4, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: THE VICE PRESIDENT

I recommend that you issue a statement which re-affirms your support for the development of 200 nuclear power plants by 1985, and expresses your opposition to the "Nuclear Power Reappraisal Act" and Proposition 15, the California Nuclear Initiative.

Situation

1. Senator Mike Gravel (D., Alaska) announced that June 5 would be "National Antinuclear Day". Groups are being organized in 200 cities to hold press conferences and demonstrations in opposition to the development of nuclear power plants. It is apparent that these demonstrations have been scheduled to generate support for the passage of Proposition 15 next Tuesday in California.

2. Senator Gravel and Congressman Hamilton Fish have introduced the "Nuclear Power Reappraisal Act" at the request of Ralph Nader's "Congress Watch". This legislation would require a five-year study of nuclear power plants. During that period, no new construction could take place.

3. On March 30, in response to questions directed to you during a meeting with the American Agricultural Editors Association, you stated: "... I am a firm believer that nuclear power has to...be expanded..." You further stated that: "... I am very opposed to Referendum Number 15. I think it would be tragic because California, like 49 other States, does need nuclear power."

4. You have announced your policy to construct 200 new nuclear plants by 1985.

DRAFT STATEMENT FOR THE PRESIDENT
ON THE ANTINUCLEAR EFFORTS

Today, throughout this Nation, groups are conducting demonstrations to express their opposition to the development of nuclear power. The American people are being subjected to the false impression that the generation of power from nuclear plants is unsafe and detrimental to the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

Pending before the Congress of the United States, is legislation which would stop all new construction of nuclear power plants for a five-year period.

Next Tuesday, Californians will vote on an initiative which, if passed, would essentially shut down nuclear reactors throughout the State, and prevent the use of nuclear power for decades to come. It is obvious that June 5 was scheduled as National Antinuclear Day as an effort to influence this vote.

It is my view that these antinuclear efforts constitute a dangerous obstacle to the future development and progress in this country and in the world.

Those persons advocating a halt in the development of nuclear power sources are, by their action, calling for a halt in the growth in this Nation.

It is my belief that growth is essential if the millions of Americans are to have the opportunity to improve their quality of life. In our democratic society, growth is not only essential, it is demanded.

The key to healthful growth is energy. The United States has the resources within its borders to achieve energy self-reliance. But this requires an immediate effort. We must develop our nuclear capacity, our coal resources, our oil and gas potentialities, conservation measures, and other long-term sources of energy, such as solar power.

Nuclear power is not going to go away. Once a scientific discovery sweeps the world and a new technology is widely disseminated, it will not disappear. Nor can it be suppressed by any one group or nation. As with any other technology, it behooves us to push forward to realize its full benefits while we provide essential safety, improve efficiency and handle the problem of nuclear waste.

We now have 56 nuclear plants operating in the United States, with a safety record that is higher than any other method of producing power. No member of the public has ever been injured as a result of nuclear power in this country. Safe methods of disposing of nuclear waste have been developed by the Energy Research and Development Administration.

This year, more than 40 percent of our oil will be imported from foreign sources -- if we fail to develop our own resources, we will be importing 60 percent of our oil by 1985.

I have called for the construction of 200 new nuclear power plants in this country by 1985, which would increase our electric power generation from this source from 9 percent to 26 percent.

This Nation cannot tolerate unnecessary delays in our efforts to achieve energy independence.

We must firmly reject the no-growth advocates and the doomsayers who are behind these anti-nuclear efforts. Such negative thinking is uncharacteristic of, and incompatible with the traditional American spirit of problem-solving and advancement.

I call on all Americans who seek a better future for their children and for the children of the world to

join with me in defeating the opponents of economic progress and nuclear power.