



VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
HOSPITAL

IRVING AVENUE AND UNIVERSITY PLACE
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 13210

January 27, 1978

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

Mr. Charles A. Zielinski
Acting Chairman
Public Service Commission
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223

Dear Mr. Zielinski:

On December 10, 1973, I addressed a letter to one of your predecessors, Chairman Joseph Swidter, in which I acquainted him with what I felt was pertinent information concerning possible biological hazards at the proposed 765 Kv transmission lines. The letter was written in good faith, as a physician and researcher in possession of information that I felt obligated to transmit for the public good. In the same fashion, I subsequently committed my time and that of my colleague Dr. Andrew Marino, to the lengthy series of hearings that evolved (cases #26529 and 26559). Throughout my association with the Public Service Commission I must note that all of the commission representatives with whom we came into direct contact respected our motivation and provided us with unstinting cooperation, particularly Mr. Robert Simpson, with whom we worked most closely.

It is therefore most distressing to me personally to review the recently issued "Recommended Decision on Health and Safety Effects of 765 Kv Transmission Lines" by Examiners Matias and Colbeth. I find that this document presents a biased, distorted and remarkably incomplete account of the hearings and essentially consists of a direct attack upon the integrity and motivation of Dr. Marino. While Dr. Marino will prepare a point by point rebuttal of the charges, suffice it to say that in my opinion, they are without substance. You, no doubt, are aware that the public and the press attach considerable importance to such documents issued by the Examiners, affording them the same status as pronouncements from the Commission itself. I find it difficult to understand, therefore, how the Commission could permit the publication of such a document. The fact that the final recommendations by the Examiners substantiated our position, that a possible hazard does exist, is unnoticed in the

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publicity afforded the vicious charges against Dr. Marino and indirectly, against me.

Both Dr. Marino and I agreed to serve as Commission witnesses in the full knowledge that we were placing our scientific reputations at risk by raising a challenge against some very powerful interests. We, however, expected fair and unbiased treatment by personnel of the Commission itself.

I trust that the Commission itself will reject these unsubstantiated charges and will recognize that the document presents a most biased and incomplete recounting of the hearings.

Sincerely,



Robert O. Becker, M.D.
Project Director

and
Chief, Orthopedic Surgery

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