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Mar. 9, 1999

[ ]
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Dear[ ]

I am writing to you in the hope that you may be able to arbitrate a problem between the MURR management and me.

In 1995, with the encouragement and support of the MURR management, we helped the research reactor center in Sao Paulo Brazil (IPEN) prepare a proposal to their funding agency (the FAPESP), to acquire from us the components needed to construct a high performance neutron powder diffractometer. This was modeled after our unique and successful designs. The prices we indicated to them would have left substantial excess revenue (profit) for MURR, even after the personnel costs had been fully recovered. The FAPESP finally awarded the funding in late 1997, and we received a request for a pro-forma invoice in April 1998. After many months of discussion,[ ]decided the MURR would not engage in that type of business activity, and we have been struggling with the commitments we made. We have finally decided to carry out the work as a private business.

During the period when this project was pending, I visited Brazil, as an invited speaker at the Physical Society National Meeting and at various Universities in 1997 and again in 1998 as an invited speaker at a Latin American Workshop on Magnetism. As a result of those visits we have begun several collaborative programs, and I wrote a proposal to the NSF to support these through a "neutron scattering school" to be conducted in Brazil. My Brazilian counterparts have written (and submitted) a parallel proposal to the CNPq (the national science foundation of Brazil). I have been trying to get approval for this submission since the first week in January. The reactor management continues to put obstacles in the way of this, most recently insisting that beam port charges, associated with measurements performed by students in the school, be recovered *in full*, because (according to them) the benefits to MURR of this proposal were not sufficiently great otherwise. This is impossible because the NSF has been categorical in its refusal to pay neutron charges.

[ ]has argued that the benefits of this proposal do not justify waiving the neutron charges. In fact, those benefits are substantial:

1) Recovered salary for me and[ ](and indirects)
2) Enhanced collaborations with scientists at some of the premier research institutions in Latin America leading to publications, presentations, future funding, etc.
3) Recognition for the University and the investigators.
4) Access to students from Brazil, paid by their home institutions.

an equal opportunity institution

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Furthermore, the incremental cost to the reactor to carry out this work is nil. No supplies are required and the only people involved are my students, for whom this is a part of their education. If the instrument is idle, the reactor realizes no cost saving.

I agree that we should try to recover the neutron charges when possible, but this should not be an impediment to research if that funding is unavailable and the beams are idle. This issue, of course, is not restricted to this project, but affects all MU researchers who wish to do neutron beam research at MURR. It should be noted, as well, that the National Labs do not charge for beam time when a proposal is accepted, either for neutron beam research or for synchrotron research.

The management has also continued to raise "conflict-of interest" issues without trying to determine if they are real and if so how can they be resolved, further delaying this process. Of course, this issue would never have arisen if the reactor had not prevented us from proceeding with the original project as a funded grant program.

In the most recent e-mail on the subject (Mar 8, 199), my veracity is questioned, as though I had some ulterior motive for withholding from MURR the revenue it is entitled to. This poisonous atmosphere makes it impossible to work effectively and has had a severe impact on the morale of a large number of MURR employees.

I believe the difficulties I have encountered with regard to this submission are, in part, retaliation for filing a grievance against the MURR management, and are clearly inconsistent with [ ] agreement, in mediation of that grievance, to provide timely response to grant submissions. I feel that I have been singled out for mistreatment, and the MURR management is using any plausible excuse to interfere with my legitimate activities, and is violating my academic freedom in the process

I have attached to this letter the correspondence related to this matter. If I have to wait for my grievance to be settled before any action can be taken on this matter, than the opportunity will have been irrevocably lost. Perhaps you can help find a mechanism whereby the proposal can be submitted and the outstanding issues resolved while it is being considered in Washington.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely.

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