

PDR

70-2219

**EXXON NUCLEAR COMPANY, Inc.**

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J. R. RAYMOND

December 17, 1979

Mr. William J. Dircks  
Director of Nuclear Material  
Safety and Safeguards  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Attention: Mr. R. E. Cunningham

Re: Part 70 License Application  
Docket 70-2219

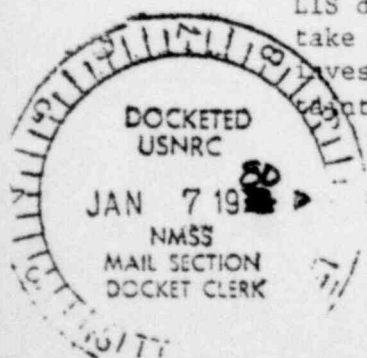


Dear Sir:

On February 27, 1976, Exxon Nuclear Company, Inc., filed an application for a license to possess special nuclear material pursuant to 10 CFR Section 70.21 for its proposed Experimental Test Facility (ETF). This application was accompanied by documents containing necessary information for the Commission's consideration in determining whether a license should be granted. It was assigned docket No. 70-2219 and has been pending at all times thereafter. On July 14, 1976, the application was supplemented by submission of documents XN-EL-29 and XN-EL-29-SUPP. These documents were later updated to reflect construction and operating plan modifications by submission of document XN-EL-29, Rev. 2, on August 30, 1979.

The purpose of this letter is to advise the Commission that Exxon Nuclear wishes to withdraw the subject application, and to request that any activities with respect thereto be discontinued by the Commission.

Exxon Nuclear and the Avco Everett Research Laboratory, which is associated with us in the ownership and development of laser isotope separation (LIS) technology, have made significant progress in developing the laser enrichment technique. That progress enhances our confidence in this highly-promising technology and further supports our view that the national interest incentives for continuing an aggressive LIS development program are great. However, our further course must take account of other factors which have a direct bearing on private investment in this field at this time. Primary among these is uncertainty as to the Government's receptivity to private participation in



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AFFILIATE OF EXXON CORPORATION

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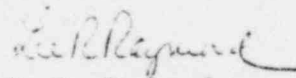
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the enrichment sector at a time when national and international policies in this sphere are still evolving. Weighing these considerations, we have reluctantly decided not to proceed with construction of the privately-funded ETF as described in the license application now pending before the NRC. Rather, we plan to explore with DOE in the near future various possible alternatives for proceeding with laser enrichment development under some form of cooperative arrangement with the Government; we believe this highly preferable to simply abandoning what is potentially a valuable national asset.

In light of this license application withdrawal, Exxon Nuclear requests that the Commission return all proprietary documents which we have submitted to the Commission and that mutually agreeable action be taken by NRC to assure the continued confidentiality of NRC-generated documents which contain JNAI proprietary data. We are also prepared to discuss with you the return or other disposition, as appropriate, of nonproprietary documents submitted in support of the JNAI application.

Your prior review of our application, including the environmental assessment and safety aspects of the program, is much appreciated. We regret that circumstances now dictate a withdrawal of our license application.

Very truly yours,

  
L. R. Raymond  
President

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