



OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90024

June 14, 1984

Mr. Nunzio J. Palladino, Chairman
Office of the Commissioner
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Dear Commissioner Palladino:

I write to inform you that I have decided to withdraw the application for renewal of the license for the UCLA research reactor (Docket No. 50-142; License No. R-71), currently pending before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, and intend to initiate steps to decommission the reactor. I have today informed the Board of Regents of the University of California of this decision, and have asked the University's attorneys to terminate the relicensing proceedings.

My decision to decommission the reactor four years after submitting an application for license renewal was reached after extensive consultation with academic administrators on the campus, and solely as a result of our examination of the changed circumstances affecting the academic benefits and escalating costs of continued operation of the reactor facility. The use of the fission reactor by the School of Engineering and Applied Science at UCLA for teaching and research purposes has declined in the years since we filed for license renewal. During this same period the costs of the reactor have risen dramatically. We have also had to take into account uncertainties in the future of research reactor programs. In the last several months the Commission seems to have moved rapidly in the direction of requiring research reactor facilities to convert from the use of high-enrichment uranium to low-enrichment fuel, with associated costs that are, at present, unknown.

The timing of our review of the fission reactor program and decision to decommission is related to the appointment, last summer, of a new Dean of Engineering, who has had to reevaluate the School's programs and priorities in light of available resources, and the current maintenance status of the reactor. As we recently informed the Commission, the UCLA reactor is out of operation, pending correction of a sticking control blade. Correction of the problem will require disassembly of the reactor core, and prudence dictates that we reach a decision on the future of the reactor now, before committing personnel and resources to such a major maintenance effort. We have concluded that the potential expense of maintenance, fuel conversion (perhaps involving another relicensing proceeding), and ongoing operation of the reactor simply cannot be justified in light of its declining importance to our academic programs.

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Mr. Nunzio Palladino, Chairman

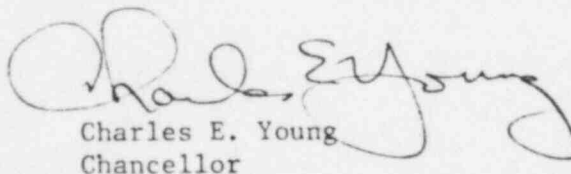
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I regret that a final resolution by the Licensing Board of all the issues raised in the proceedings has not been obtained. Nonetheless, we are pleased to note that the technical staff of the Commission, which over the past several years has exhaustively reviewed our license renewal application, concluded in its published evaluations that the UCLA reactor has been operated safely throughout its 24-year history and would be expected to do so during the proposed renewal period.

We appreciate the assistance and cooperation of the staff of the Commission, particularly during the relicensing period, and look forward to working with them in carrying out a decommissioning plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles E. Young". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Charles E. Young
Chancellor

cc: Director of Nuclear Reactor Regulation