

40-8027

FEB 2 1970

Harold L. Price, Director of Regulation

STATUS REPORT OF PENDING KERR-McGEE APPLICATIONS

The following summarizes where we stand with respect to the two Kerr-McGee applications.

Sequoyah Facility - Additional information concerning this application has been submitted by letters dated January 13 and 23. With the exception of the disposal well, we are now in a position to act favorably on the application. Additional information on the geology of the well area, which we received on January 28, is under review by our geological consultant, Dr. Don Warner. We have also reviewed this information with USGS. However, based on the information supplied thus far, both Dr. Warner and the USGS have reservations as to the adequacy of the geology of the well site for the waste disposal contemplated. It appears at this time that further geological assessment will be needed from Kerr-McGee before a final decision can be made on the adequacy of the well. We expect to request this information before the end of this week.

In a phone call from Frank Pittman on Friday, January 30, 1970, he gave me some additional information on the problems with respect to the Sequoyah plant startup. Kerr-McGee has a contract which calls for supplying toll-enriched UF₆ to an overseas customer. The deliveries under the contract are to begin in May 1970, and the crude yellow cake must be at Sequoyah in February for weighing and sampling, with processing to begin the latter part of February.

Kerr-McGee presently has a "storage-only" license for the Sequoyah facility, and in response to his question, I told Pittman we could amend that license to permit weighing and sampling. Pittman also asked whether it would be easier to authorize the use of deep well if the aqueous effluents are segregated in two streams (which would be possible in the operation of the plant, according to Pittman); one stream, representing about 90% of the total volume, would contain low concentrations (2-5% of MPC) of uranium and daughter products, and this stream would be placed in disposal well. The other stream, representing 10% of the total volume, would contain substantially higher radioactivity content, and would be placed in the evaporation ponds, which I discussed in my memo to you of January 26, 1970.

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I indicated to Pittman that I could not prejudge the outcome of such a request but I thought it would be worthwhile proposing such a course of action. I also noted to Pittman that the presence of high concentration of nitrate in waste liquids is beginning to give the geological people problems, because of the recently increasing attention being paid to effects of nitrates in the environment.

Cimarron Plutonium Plant - With the exception of the disposal well and the tornado aspect, we are now in a position where we can prepare an appropriate license. Additional information is needed from Kerr-McGee on the disposal well and a letter is being sent requesting this information. We understand their plant can operate for a few months without this disposal well. The review of the tornado evaluation by DRL is not yet complete but we expect to hear from them in the next few days.

Original Signed by

J. A. McBride

J. A. McBride, Director
Division of Materials Licensing

cc: C. K. Beck
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