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Science Advancing Health

XSNM-3060

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Via Fax 202-647-0775

Mr. Richard J. K. Stratford
Director, Office of Nuclear Energy Affairs
Room 7828
Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Stratford:

RE: ANL Visit to SGN June 30, 2000
LEU target development program for the MAPLE reactors and New
Processing Facility

As mentioned when we met on April 20, 2000, MDS Nordion believes that management of the waste arising from processing LEU targets presents a key technological challenge that requires further development work. In particular, the issue, as noted in our May 31, 2000 report to the USNRC, appears to be the capacity and capability of the NPF calcining system. We were pleased to be able to host a visit by ANL to SGN on June 30, 2000, to review the calcining process and the technical challenges associated with converting this process from HEU to LEU targets.

I believe the visit was most helpful in demonstrating to ANL the significant effort that MDS Nordion has made in the LEU target development program for the MAPLE reactors and New Processing Facility. The technical staff at SGN took the opportunity to explain in detail the calcining process and the key process control parameters that must be maintained to operate a commercial medical isotope production process on a continuous basis. I believe the detailed discussions, on the process and the several suggestions which arose during the meeting, have equipped ANL with a better understanding of the extent of the development work that we have accomplished to date. We were also able to explore various ideas which might facilitate conversion to LEU targets which I believe were addressed to the satisfaction of ANL.

There is of course, significant development work yet to be done during the Conceptual Development Phase before the conversion program can be implemented. In my discussions with ANL, I informed them that we would be developing our plan for this phase and execute it during a period of time that would likely take us to the end of 2001. I believe they are generally supportive of the amount of time and effort it will take to accomplish the next phase of work.

If you have any questions on the trip, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours very truly



Grant Malkoske
Vice-President
Engineering & Technology

c.c.: Robin DeLaBarre (US State)
Ronald Hauber (USNRC)
Leonard Spector (USDOE)
Armando Travelli (ANL)
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