

May 28, 2003

Mr. Leo Bobek, Chairman, TRTR
Nuclear Radiation Laboratory
University of Massachusetts - Lowell
One University Avenue
Lowell, Massachusetts 01854

Dear Mr. Bobek:

I want to thank you and the National Organization of Test, Research, and Training Reactors (TRTR) for inviting me to speak at your annual conference, scheduled this year on August 12 - 15, 2003. From my past involvement with TRTR, I am supportive of its mission and understand its importance and I was looking forward to the opportunity. However, due to the current demands on the agency and my time as the Chairman, it is with my deepest regrets that I must decline your invitation.

Over the last decade, the Nation's nuclear science and technology education infrastructure has declined in the United States with some universities ending their nuclear engineering programs. Implicit in the Nation's energy strategy is the need for a qualified and trained nuclear science and engineering workforce. I believe technology evolves with the advancement of science and engineering. These advancements occur primarily at academic institutions, national laboratories, industry, and other research and development facilities through the efforts of many dedicated researchers in the scientific community. I view TRTR and its membership as being a vital part of the research and educational community. The investments we make today, both in research and development and in sustaining and enhancing our educational infrastructure to prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers, will determine our ability to respond to the Nation's energy demands and its environmental and medical challenges over the next several decades. Your efforts in these regards are vital and much appreciated.

I have found the periodic visits of the TRTR Executive Committee with the Commissioners to be beneficial and I personally appreciate the contributions of your group to the country. Again, I would like to thank you for the invitation to address the annual TRTR conference and offer my best wishes for a successful meeting and all your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz