

memorandum

ES - 90-004568

Date: MAR 15 1990

SECRETARIAL ACTION REQUESTED BY: 03/21/90

Orig. Office: ER-16:Gajewski:3-5995

Transmittal: ACTION: Approval of Department's Response to the Energy Research Advisory Board's Report on Cold Fusion

To: The Secretary

cc pg 3/22

Through: Deputy Secretary

JS/WHM 3/21/90

Issue: The attached letter from Decker to Landis is the Department's proposed response to the Energy Research Advisory Board's Cold Fusion Report. It is submitted for your review and approval.

Timing: No specific urgency.

- Discussion:
- o ER staff has reviewed the Report.
 - o We agree with the Report's basic thrusts:
 - Skepticism regarding the scientific validity of cold fusion phenomena.
 - There remain unresolved scientific issues.
 - o We agree with the Report's principal recommendations:
 - No need to establish special cold fusion programs.
 - Need for research, at a modest level of effort, to clarify unresolved scientific issues.
 - o We conclude that ER should continue to be receptive to high-quality research proposals in the area of cold fusion. Awards will be made through a normal process, on a competitive basis.

Recommendation: That you approve the attached Decker to Landis letter.

James F. Decker
Acting Director
Office of Energy Research

Attachment:
Tab A - Letter from Decker to Landis

APPROVED:

[Handwritten signature]

DISAPPROVED:

DATE:

3/22/90

Cold Fusion

DISCLAIMER

Portions of this document may be illegible in electronic image products. Images are produced from the best available original document.

MAR 15 1990

ER-16
R.G.
Gajewski
2/28/90

Orig. Office: ER-16:Gajewski:3-5995

Transmittal: ACTION: Approval of Department's Response to the Energy Research Advisory Board's Report on Cold Fusion

ER-10
Stevens
2/28/90

To: The Secretary

Through: Deputy Secretary

Issue: The attached letter from Decker to Landis is the Department's proposed response to the Energy Research Advisory Board's Cold Fusion Report. It is submitted for your review and approval.

ER-61
DM
Mayhew
3/6/90

Timing: No specific urgency.

- Discussion:
- o ER staff has reviewed the Report.
 - o We agree with the Report's basic thrusts:
 - Skepticism regarding the scientific validity of cold fusion phenomena.
 - There remain unresolved scientific issues.
 - o We agree with the Report's principal recommendations:
 - No need to establish special cold fusion programs.
 - Need for research, at a modest level of effort, to clarify unresolved scientific issues.
 - o We conclude that ER should continue to be receptive to high-quality research proposals in the area of cold fusion. Awards will be made through a normal process, on a competitive basis.

ER-6
Stone
3/2/90

ER-60
Adler
3/8/90

Recommendation: That you approve the attached Decker to Landis letter.

ER-1
Nelson
3/9/90

Signed by
James F. Decker

James F. Decker
Acting Director
Office of Energy Research

ER-1
Decker
3/13/90

Attachment:
Tab A - Letter from Decker to Landis

APPROVED: _____

DISAPPROVED: _____

DATE: _____

cc: ER-10, ER-60, ER-6, ER-61, ER-1 (3) ER-622/FTL-3

ER-16:Gajewski:mfr:3-5995:2-27-90:c:\Gajewski\ERAB:wp



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

March 22, 1990

Mr. John Landis, Chairman
Energy Research Advisory Board
Stone & Webster Engineering
Corporation
245 Summer Street
Boston, MA 02107

Dear Mr. Landis:

This is in response to the Energy Research Advisory Board's (ERAB) Report on Cold Fusion Research. On behalf of the Department of Energy, I am pleased to accept the Report and its recommendations.

In reviewing the Report, I note two distinct thrusts. One reflects a healthy skepticism regarding results claimed to be indicative of cold fusion. The other represents an equally healthy desire to further explore the various physical phenomena thought by some to be associated with cold fusion. The two thrusts combined provide a prudent foundation for the Department of Energy on which to base its approach to cold fusion research. Accordingly, the Office of Energy Research does not plan to institute any special cold fusion programs, but will continue to be receptive, at a modest scale and through a regular funding process, to high-quality research proposals aimed at elucidation of the pertinent physical phenomena.

ERAB's Cold Fusion Panel, under the able leadership of its co-chairmen Drs. Huizenga and Ramsey, did an outstanding job of critically sifting through a sizeable volume of experimental data. The Report reflects the Panel's evaluation of these data and thus itself acquires the rank of an important scientific contribution, helping to shed light onto a field fraught with uncertainties and disputed claims.

In developing the Report, ERAB and its Cold Fusion Panel have performed an important service to the Department. Please accept and convey to the membership of both bodies my deeply felt appreciation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Decker".

James F. Decker
Acting Director
Office of Energy Research

MAR 22 1990

Mr. John Landis, Chairman
Energy Research Advisory Board
Stone & Webster Engineering
Corporation
245 Summer Street
Boston, MA 02107

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In reviewing the Report, I note two distinct thrusts. One reflects a healthy skepticism regarding results claimed to be indicative of cold fusion. The other represents an equally healthy desire to further explore the various physical phenomena thought by some to be associated with cold fusion. The two thrusts combined provide a prudent foundation for the Department of Energy on which to base its approach to cold fusion research. Accordingly, the Office of Energy Research does not plan to institute any special cold fusion programs, but will continue to be receptive, at a modest scale and through a regular funding process, to high-quality research proposals aimed at elucidation of the pertinent physical phenomena.

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Sincerely,

Signed by
James F. Decker

James F. Decker
Acting Director
Office of Energy Research

bcc: ER-1/3, ER-10, ER-60, ER-6, ER-61, ER-622 (FTL)
ER-16:RGajewski:mfr:3-5995:2-27-90:c:\Gajewski\Landis:wp

ER-16 R.G. Gajewski 2/28/90	ER-10 Stevens 2/28/90	ER-61 PM Mayhew 3/9/90	ER-6 Stone / 90	ER-60 PM Adler 3/9/90	ER-11 JWA Nelson 3/9/90	ER-1 JFD Decker 3/13/90
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OS

ROUTING AND TRANSMITTAL SLIP

Date 2/1/90

TO: (Name, office symbol, room number, building, Agency/Post)	Initials	Date
1. Don Stevens, ER-10		
2. R. Gajewski		
3.		
4.		
5.		

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action	File	Note and Return
Approval	For Clearance	Per Conversation
As Requested	For Correction	Prepare Reply
Circulate	For Your Information	See Me
Comment	Investigate	Signature
Coordination	Justify	

REMARKS

Enclosed is the ERAB Cold Fusion Report.
 Please prepare for my signature the
 Department's response. The response should
 be addressed to Mr. John Landis, the ERAB
 Chairman.

DO NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disposals, clearances, and similar actions

FROM: (Name, org. symbol, Agency/Post) James F. Decker, ER-1	Room No.—Bldg. 7B-058
	Phone No. 65434

5041-102

* U.S.G.P.O.: 1984 -421-529/416

OPTIONAL FORM 41 (Rev. 7-76)
 Prescribed by GSA
 FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.206

"SUMMARY MEMORANDUM"

Date: November 30, 1989 SECRETARIAL ACTION REQUESTED BY:
Orig. Office: ER-6; William Woodard; 6-5444
Transmittal: ACTION: Transmittal and Review of the Energy Research
Advisory Board's Report on Cold Fusion
To: The Secretary
Through: The Deputy Secretary
Issues: To implement the Board's recommendations.
Timing: A prompt acknowledgement to the Chairman for the Board's
efforts would be appreciated.
Discussion: Last April you asked the Board to assess the possibility of
cold fusion. In the enclosed report the Board concluded
that the experimental results on excess energy from
calorimetric cells reported to date do not present
convincing evidence that useful sources of energy will
result from the phenomena attributed to cold fusion. In
addition, the Board concluded that experiments reported to
date do not present convincing evidence to associate the
reported anomalous heat with a nuclear process. The Board
also recommended against the establishment of special
programs or research centers to develop cold fusion but is
sympathetic toward modest support for carefully focused and
cooperative experiments within the present funding system.
Recommendation: That you sign the attached letter to Mr. Landis
acknowledging receipt of the report.

James F. Decker
Acting Director
Office of Energy Research

Attachment

APPROVED _____

DISAPPROVED: _____

DATE: _____

ER-6

ACTION: Transmittal and Review of the Energy Research Advisory Board's Report on Cold Fusion

The Secretary

Thru: The Deputy Secretary

BACKGROUND:

On April 24, 1989, you asked the Energy Research Advisory Board to review the experiments and theory of the recent work on cold fusion and identify research that should be undertaken to determine, if possible, what physical, chemical, or other processes may be involved. You also asked the Board to identify what R&D direction the DOE should pursue to understand fully these phenomena and develop the information that could lead to their practical application.

DISCUSSION:

In March 1989 a group of Utah scientists claimed the attainment of cold fusion. Following these announcements, and in response to your request, the Energy Research Advisory Board convened a panel to assess the possibility of cold fusion. This panel visited several laboratories, studied the open literature and numerous privately distributed reports, and participated in many discussions. The Panel prepared a draft report which was reviewed and approved by the Board.

The report concludes that the experimental results on excess energy from calorimetric cells reported to date do not present convincing evidence that useful sources of energy will result from the phenomena attributed to cold fusion, and that experiments reported to date do not present convincing evidence to associate the reported anomalous heat with a nuclear process. The report also recommends against the establishment of special programs or research centers to develop cold fusion. However, the report points out that there remain unresolved issues which may have interesting implications and the Board is, therefore, sympathetic toward modest support for carefully focused and cooperative experiments within the present funding system.

INCURRENCES	
RTG SYMBOL	ER-6
INITIALS/SIG.	Wobdard
DATE	1/30/89
RTG SYMBOL	ER-6
INITIALS/SIG.	J.F. Finn
DATE	11/30/89
RTG SYMBOL	ER-6
INITIALS/SIG.	P. Stone
DATE	
RTG SYMBOL	ER-60
INITIALS/SIG.	I. Adler
DATE	
RTG SYMBOL	ER-2
INITIALS/SIG.	Nelson
DATE	
RTG SYMBOL	ER-1
INITIALS/SIG.	J. Decker
DATE	
RTG SYMBOL	FS
INITIALS/SIG.	
DATE	
RTG SYMBOL	
INITIALS/SIG.	
DATE	

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- o That you sign the attached letter to Mr. Landis acknowledging receipt of the report.
- o Since cold fusion research is properly an area of responsibility of the Office of Energy Research, I will undertake steps to review its conclusions and recommendations. I will provide you with the results of the internal review, including recommended actions, when the review is completed, and prepare a response to the Board for your review and approval.

James F. Decker
Acting Director
Office of Energy Research

APPROVED: _____

DISAPPROVED: _____

DATE: _____

Attachments: TAB A - Charge Letter
TAB B - Board's Response
TAB C - Letter to Mr. Landis

ER-6:Woodard:mr:11/30/89:Cold Fusion Panel Disc:Trans

bcc: ER-1 (4)
ER-2
ER-60
ER-622
ER-6
ES (4)



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

Mr. John Landis
Senior Vice President
Stone & Webster Engineering
Corporation
245 Summer Street
Boston, MA 02107

Dear Mr. Landis:

I wish to thank you for the Energy Research Advisory Board's report on cold fusion research which you recently sent me.

I have asked the Director of the Office of Energy Research to review the report, and to provide you with the Department's evaluation of the report in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,

James D. Watkins
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)

DOE/S-0073

Cold Fusion Research

November 1989

A Report of the
Energy Research Advisory Board
to the
United States Department of Energy