Prime Minister

I have replied indicating your interest in this area and undertaking to convey the substance of the letter to Dr Nicholson's team. MTS 28/9

OXFORD RESEARCH SYSTEMS

DATE: 26th September, 1983
OUR REF:
YOUR REF:

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Telephone 0235 32421
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MT

PS 28

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, P.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister of the United Kingdon and Northern Ireland,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1.

Dear Prime Minister,

I was very interested to read of the Government's recent seminar relating to the many issues associated with research and development in the U.K. In particular, I believe that the role played in the U.K. in the application of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) to biology and medicine was discussed. I would like to aquaint you with the contributions that Oxford Research Systems Limited (ORS) have already made in this high-technology field and how we intend to capitalise on our own expertise and innovation to address the requirements of the biological research, health care and related markets.

In 1980, the Oxford Instruments Group (OIG) launched ORS to promote and market a new type of NMR spectrometer capable of studying animal and human metabolism in a non-invasive manner. The application areas and instrumental requirements were considered distinct enough from those associated with NMR imaging to merit the introduction of this type of spectrometer. New techniques were required and these were developed in close collaboration with Dr George Radda's group at the Biochemistry Department of Oxford University. During 1980 - 1983, a total of ten instruments were sold in the UK and North America but despite the technical success of the instrumentation, OIG decided to withdraw from the end - user NMR spectroscopy/imaging market. This action allowed OIG to concentrate on building the superconducting magnets that lie at the heart of this type of equipment.

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In March, 1983, ORS was aquired by the Bruker group which is a German based European consortium of companies that specialise in NMR products for the analytical chemistry market - the traditional market for NMR. With few exceptions, the team of scientists remained in the U.K. with ORS under the new management and has now embarked on continuing our existing product line together with exploiting the new possibilities that exist now that ORS is backed by the world's leading manufacturer of NMR equipment.

NMR is a subject where U.K. trained scientists have made major innovative contributions and are still doing so in many centres throughout the world. In biology and medicine the advantages of NMR imaging are obvious but yet to be fully realised is the possibility of whole body real-time NMR imaging/spectroscopy and also the extent to which NMR spectroscopy can graduate from being clinically interesting to being clinically useful. At present, The technology that we have develpoed and still manufacture is used in biochemistry laboratories, clinical research centres and neonatal units in the U. K., Canada and the U.S.A.

It is our intention to improve and refine our techniques, maintaining our position as leaders in this area. The ORS development programme includes continued cooperation with University departments and with the Department of Trade and Industry under the Support For Innovation scheme.

I hope that this letter conveys that at ORS there is a considerable amount of development and manufacture of technically advanced NMR products being carried out. If you would like further information or details, I will be pleased to provide them.

I have the honour to remain,
your obedient servant,

R. E. Gordon

DR R E GORDON
Managing Director