and illustrated a growing maturity even while the total space program was slowing down. The measure of its growing maturity was its ability to find missions in a shrinking space effort and solve technical problems even as nuclear technology lost public favor, and in the face of on-going organizational and personnel changes in the key federal agencies.

Sustaining Program Momentum

By the beginning of 1971, the RTG program had firm commitments for supporting a number of space missions, most of them for NASA but also one Transit navigational satellite for the Navy. Missions that would fly with RTG power systems during the succeeding four years were:

	Launch Date
Apollo 14 (SNAP-27)	31 January 1971
Apollo 15 (SNAP-27)	26 July 1971
Pioneer 10 (SNAP-19)	2 March 1972
Apollo 16 (SNAP-27)	16 April 1972
Triad-01-1X (Transit-RTG)	2 September 1972
Apollo 17 (SNAP-27)	7 December 1972
Pioneer 11 (SNAP-19)	5 April 1973

NASA had commitments to supply SNAP-19s for the Viking missions to Mars. The AEC contracted with General Electric to conduct a "technology readiness" effort for a Multi-Hundred Watt (MHW) RTG in anticipation that NASA would place specific requirements for a Grand Tour of planets later in the decade. At this time DOD also came to the AEC with a request for development of the Multi-Hundred Watt RTG for its Lincoln Laboratory communications satellites.

In considering this request, the Director of Space Nuclear Systems, Milton Klein, expressed some of the major budgetary problems then current in the RTG program. Klein focused on the distinction between "technical readiness" and "development." The former was defined "as the conduct of work up to a point sufficient to demonstrate that all significant technical problems have been identified and the solutions sufficiently demonstrated so that a potential user will have *confidence* that the technology will work if developed on a realistic