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ecological
study*

psm

AUG 15 1962

Dear Glenn:

I refer to your letter of January 26, 1962, in which you outlined the background and scope of the Commission's interest in the biological and environmental effects of nuclear war.

In a letter of reply dated March 6, 1962, Mr. Gilpatric concurred in the view that there is a need for continued study and evaluation in this area and outlined a number of aspects which were of interest to the Department of Defense. You will recall that the Defense letter of March 6 suggested the establishment of a working group under the Chairmanship of the Atomic Energy Commission with the first order of business addressed to a review of that work which has been accomplished to date in this area.

As you indicated in your letter of March 20 to Mr. Gilpatric, the study group organization was initiated and AEC-DoD liaison was effected through my office. After a few preliminary meetings of representatives of our respective staffs, Mr. Hollister agreed to undertake a special nuclear attack study, an assessment of the immediate effects and the longer term post-attack biological and ecological effects of a nuclear attack, comparing the results under variations in weights of attack and degrees of weapon "cleanliness."

To date this particular study has been handled on an informal basis and both Dr. Dunham and Mr. Hal Hollister have been most cooperative. The Department of Defense Damage Assessment Center has completed the computer runs and the immediate casualty data have been computed for the parameters considered. I understand that the data on fallout distribution for the cases considered have been forwarded to Mr. Hollister as of August 13th.

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4

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As I have indicated to you in our past conversations on this point, I am quite confident that the results of this study will bear on many areas of current DoD interest; strategic planning and constraint considerations associated therewith, weapon development and possibly future stockpile composition. In view of the timing for our respective considerations of these matters, it would be highly desirable to receive by September 15th a final study report on this initial ecological study.

Sincerely,

Signed: Jerry

Gerald W. Johnson
Assistant to the Secretary
of Defense (Atomic Energy)

Honorable Glenn T. Seaborg
Chairman
U.S. Atomic Energy Commission

GWJ/WFVB/gjp/14Aug62
ATSD(AE) 3E1074/x74405



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