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18 SEP 1963

*for a
Geological Survey*

Honorable Glenn T. Seaborg
Chairman
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Glenn:

I am attaching a copy of General Leon W. Johnson's letter of 5 September 1963 on the subject of the biological and environmental effects of a nuclear attack. You may recall that your conceptual letter of 29 January 1962 to Mr. McNamara outlined the scope and background of the Commission's interest in evaluations of the biological and environmental consequences of nuclear war and invited comments and suggestions on the studies which the Commission proposed to undertake on a continuing basis.

In response to that letter on 6 March 1962 Mr. Gilpatric emphasized the extreme importance which the Department of Defense attaches to continued study and evaluation in that area. At this time you may desire to further explore Mr. Gilpatric's suggestion concerning the establishment of a working group composed of appropriate experts as designated by the interested agencies and offices, under the Chairmanship of the Atomic Energy Commission. The Department of Defense offer to provide liaison as well as working members is still outstanding.

As you are aware the Commission is currently engaged in a study on the longer term biological and environmental consequences of nuclear attacks using "normal" and "clean" weapons as a compliment to a Department of Defense study on the immediate and short term

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effects of various levels of attack on the USSR. In house the National Military Command Support System of the Defense Communication Agency is currently evaluating the immediate and short term effects under varying shelter assumptions of various levels of attack on the U.S.

I take this occasion to encourage the Commission's studies of the longer term biological and environmental consequences of nuclear attacks, reiterate their importance, and request their continuation as a matter of priority. If the Department of Defense can provide any desired assistance, either in accordance with Mr. Gilpatric's previous suggestion, or in some other manner; please advise us.

Signed: Jerry

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

Enclosure

GWJ/CMD/ejl/11 Sep 63
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Dist: Gen. Johnson
DDR&E
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DCA

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

NET EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
Room 2E 845, The Pentagon
Washington 25, D. C.

SEP 5 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(ATOMIC ENERGY)

SUBJECT: Biological and Environmental Effects of a Nuclear
Attack

1. A recent contribution of the Atomic Energy Commission to the annual study of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee, National Security Council, was a report concerning the longer term biological and environmental consequences of a nuclear attack. The AEC report emphasized the fact that little was known concerning the question of the combined effects on survivors of radiation, thermal radiation, blast, fires, floods, substandard diet, substandard sanitary conditions, and lack of medical care and services, and that this area urgently needed study.

2. It would appear appropriate that the Atomic Energy Commission be requested to continue their study of the longer term biological and environmental consequences of a nuclear attack on the surviving population, and that the results be submitted at their earliest convenience.

Leon W. Johnson

LEON W. JOHNSON
General, USAF
Director

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