

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMED FORCES SPECIAL WEAPONS PROJECT

P. O. BOX 2610.
WASHINGTON 13, D. C.

S-1066-H-100

10103

OSD1.950421.005

12 MAR 1954

ADDRESS REPLY TO:
THE CHIEF, ARMED FORCES
SPECIAL WEAPONS PROJECT

SWPSG/700

SUBJECT: Status of Human Volunteers in Bio-medical Experimentation

TO: Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health & Medicine)
Office, Secretary of Defense
Washington 25, D. C.
ATTN: Colonel Sheldon S. Brownton

1. In carrying out its responsibilities with regard to the public release of atomic energy information under the provisions of Department of Defense Directives Nos. S-5400.2, dated 22 September 1952, and S230.4, dated 26 November 1952, the Office of Public Information requires Headquarters, Armed Forces Special Weapons Project to review and comment on releases involving the military application of atomic energy. The scope of review of documents taken by this headquarters is limited to the following:

- a. Comment is made from the security classification standpoint of the military application of atomic energy.
- b. Comment is made on technical inaccuracies from the standpoint of the military application of atomic energy.

2. In implementing this policy, the Surgeon, Headquarters, AFSWP, is frequently required to review documents containing Bio-medical experimental data obtained either by laboratory studies or from atomic weapons tests. Some of these documents contain data obtained by, and make reference to, the use of human volunteers as test subjects.

3. The Surgeon also reviews all proposals for Bio-medical research projects programmed at atomic weapons tests by other agencies as well as initiating and sponsoring such proposals. Some of these projects include the use of human volunteers.

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13 MAY 1954

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DAS(H&M) CONT NR:
S-14-67

Declassified by DNA, Chief, ISTS

Robert A. [Signature]

Date: 7/17/05

1/21/11

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SWPSG/700

Subject: Status of Human Volunteers in Bio-medical Experimentation

4. At the present time, this headquarters is reviewing a technical report entitled "Flash Blindness" which mentions the fact that human volunteers were employed during atomic weapons tests conducted in 1951. Subsequent reports from later tests on the same subject contain comparable references as well as referring to at least two instances in which volunteers were injured as a consequence of taking part in field experiments. Because of the implications involved due to these injuries, it is felt that a definite need exists for guidance in the use of human volunteers as experimental subjects.

5. It is therefore requested that this headquarters be advised if such guidance is available and, if so, that a copy of the policy directive be made available for reference. If such policy guidance has not been formulated, it is recommended that such be done and given the widest possible dissemination to preclude the occurrence of unintentional violations or incidents by research investigators.

FOR THE CHIEF, AFSWP:



IRVING L. BRANCH
Colonel, USAF
Actg. Chief of Staff

3/5/54

S4PSG/777

SUBJECT: Status of Human Volunteers in Bio-medical Experimentation

TO: Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health & Medicine)
Office, Secretary of Defense
Washington 25, D. C.
ATTN: Colonel Sheldon S. Brewster

1. In carrying out its responsibilities with regard to the public release of atomic energy information under the provisions of Department of Defense Directives Nos. S-5400.2, dated 22 September 1952, and 5239.4, dated 26 November 1952, the Office of Public Information requires Headquarters, Armed Forces Special Weapons Project to review and comment on releases involving the military application of atomic energy. The scope of review of documents taken by this headquarters is limited to the following:

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Declassified by DRA, Chief, ISFS

DATE: 8/23/54

OFFICE SYMBOL	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
GRADE AND SURNAME OF COORDINATING OFFICERS					

SWPSC/700

Subject: Status of Human Volunteers in Bio-medical Experimentation

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DISTR: FOR THE CHIEF, AFMHP:

- Cys 1 & 2 (letterhead) to addressees
- Cy 3 (green) to AG
- Cy 4 (yellow) to AG
- Cy 5 (pink) to AG
- Cy 6 (white) Medical Branch reading file
- Cy 7 (white) Medical Branch comeback file copy

IRVING L. BRANCE
Colonel, USAF
Actg. Chief of Staff

(SEE NEXT PAGE FOR M/E) - *Secret*

Lt. Col. Browning/mef/1B699A/52793
SECOND PAGE REWRITTEN Major Miller/ned/1B699A/52793 3-5-54

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OFFICE SYMBOL	1. SWPSC	2. SWPST	3. SWPSC	4. SWPCS	5. SWPAG
GRADE AND SURNAME OF COORDINATING OFFICERS					

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M/R: In Nov 53 it was learned that there existed a T/S document signed by the Secretary of Defense which listed various requirements and criteria which had to be met by individuals contemplating the use of human volunteers in Bio-medical or other types of experimentation. Since this information was of particular importance to this office in classifying and/or releasing information on the Flash Blindness programs at weapons tests, attempts were made to learn of the nature of these requirements. On 11 January 1954, Lt. Colonel Browning and Major Miller had a conference with the Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health and Medical) at which time it was learned that although this document details very definite and specific steps which must be taken before volunteers may be used in experimentation, no serious attempt has been made to disseminate the information to those experimenters who had a definite need-to-know. The lowest level at which it had been circulated was that of the three Secretaries of the Services. The Assistant Secretary and his Executive agree that the document should be downgraded but have not been able to obtain concurrence from Dr. Hannah nor from the Judge Advocate. It was suggested that this office prepare a letter for the Assistant Secretary in which was detailed our need for this information and the manner in which we were handicapped through ignorance of the provisions of this document. It is intended that this letter shall point up the need for some relaxation of the grip in which this document is now held, at least on a definite need-to-know basis.

700

Lt. Colonel Browning/mef/1B699A/52793 |
 SECOND PAGE BENEFITEN Major Miller/mef/1B699A/52793 3-5-54

OFFICE SYMBOL	1. SWPC	2. SWPEF	3. SWPSV	4. SWPCS	5. SWPAG
GRADE AND SURNAME OF COORDINATING OFFICERS	H. Nansen	Major Miller	Major Smith		Kant
	Edwards	W. J. ...			
	Edwards				Smith
					Smith

AFSWP ROUTING AND CONTROL SHEET

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NOTE: This Routing and Control Sheet will remain attached to this communication until all actions required is completed. After action has been completed it will be filed in the Assistant General's Office.

TO:	INITIALS	DATE	CON	DATE RECEIVED	CONTROL NUMBER
1 CHIEF, AFSWP			APPROVAL		EF-126
1 DEPUTY CHIEF, USAF			COMMENT		
1 DEPUTY CHIEF, USN			CONCURRENCE	FILE NUMBER	SWPSS/700
2 CHIEF STAFF	NW	2/25	INFORMATION		
1 OCS/OPERATIONS			NECESSARY ACTION		
1 CHIEF, PLANS AND COMTS			NOTE AND FORWARD	TYPE OF COMMUNICATION; NUMBER OF COPIES, INCORSEMENTS AND INCLOSURES	
1 CHIEF, OPNS AND TNG			NOTE AND RETURN		
2 OCS/ADMINISTRATION		2/25	COORDINATION	Letter to Assistant Secretary of Defense	
3 CHIEF, SECURITY	SC-3	17	FILE IN AGO		
1 CHIEF, PERSONNEL			SIGNATURE		
1 CHIEF, LOGISTICS					
2 OCS/TECHNICAL SERVICES			FROM:	DATE	
1 CHIEF, WPNS DEV			Surgeon's Office	10 Feb 1954	
1 CHIEF, WPNS EFFECTS					
1 CHIEF, WPNS DEFENSE					
1 CHIEF, WPNS TEST					
1 ADJUTANT GENERAL		7/27	SUBJECT OR SUMMARY OF THE COMMUNICATION		
1 INSPECTOR GENERAL					
1 SPECIAL ASST TO CHIEF, AFSWP					
1 HISTORIAN					
1 SURGEON					
REMARKS			Status of Human Volunteers in Bio-Medical Experimentation		
<p>Cys 1 & 2 (white letterhead) to addressee C7 3 (green) to AG C7 4 (yellow) to AG C7 5 (pink) to AG C7 6 (white) Surgeon's Reading File C7 7 (white) Surgeon's comeback copy for file</p> <p>(Diston Green) (File no.)</p>					
			<p>Declassified by DNA, Chief, ISTS</p> <p>DATE: 8/22/94</p>		

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AFSWP ROUTING AND CONTROL SHEET

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TO:	INITIALS	DATE	FOR	DATE RECEIVED	CONTROL NUMBER
CHIEF, AFSWP			APPROVAL		EF-1264
DEPUTY CHIEF, USAF			COMMENT		
DEPUTY CHIEF, USN			CONCURRENCE	FILE NUMBER	SUSPENSE DATE
4 CHIEF STAFF	YAT	3/12	INFORMATION	SWFSG/TCO	
DCS/OPERATIONS			NECESSARY ACTION		
CHIEF, PLANS AND COMTS			NOTE AND FORWARD	TYPE OF COMMUNICATION; NUMBER OF COPIES, INCORSEMENTS AND INCLOSURES Letter to Assistant Secretary of Defense	
CHIEF, OPNS AND ENG			NOTE AND RETURN		
DCS/ADMINISTRATION			COORDINATION		
1 CHIEF, SECURITY	P	10 Mar	FILE IN AGO		
CHIEF, PERSONNEL			SIGNATURE		
CHIEF, LOGISTICS					
3 DCS/TECHNICAL SERVICES		13-11	FROM:	DATE	
CHIEF, WPNS DEV			Surgeon's Office	10 Mar 1954	
2 CHIEF, WPNS EFFECTS	MS	10 Mar			
CHIEF, WPNS DEFENSE			SUBJECT OR SUMMARY OF THE COMMUNICATION Status of Human Volunteers in Bio-Medical Experimentation		
CHIEF, WPNS TEST					
5 ADJUTANT GENERAL					
INSPECTOR GENERAL					
SPECIAL ASST TO CHIEF, AFSWP					
HISTORIAN					
SURGEON	41	3-12-54			

REMARKS

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