



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RADIATION EXPERIMENTS  
1726 M STREET, N.W., SUITE 600  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036**

Dr. Gordon Soper  
Principal Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Atomic Energy  
Department of Defense  
The Pentagon Room 3E1074  
Washington, D.C. 20301-3050

July 11, 1994

Dear Gordon:

As discussed with you and Colonel Bailey on July 8, this letter is to summarize our understanding of the state of DOD responses to Advisory Committee document requests, and to identify goals and expectations for the immediate and near term. The Committee appreciates the efforts to date. However, as you know, the time frame for the Committee's work requires considerable expedition.

*Phase I DOD Search*

The January directive required DOD to search for and identify experiments (including intentional releases), and to identify the location of related documentation. The Defense Nuclear Agency (DNA) did not search for intentional releases, and did not survey significant records collections in search of data. To our knowledge, DNA has not yet complied with the January directive. The Army identified about 30 experiments in February, but now reports that it conducted hundreds of further experiments. However, the Army has evidently not yet provided the DOD Radiation Experiment Command Center, or the Committee, with the requisite listing, and further data, on these experiments. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) did not respond to the January search request, although OSD possesses much documentation of relevance and interest.

*Outstanding Committee Action Items*

Following discussion, we transmitted requests ("action items") to you on May 23 and June 22. Following discussions with DNA and the Army, we transmitted action items to them on June 8 and June 15. In addition, we have been engaged in discussions with the Navy and Air Force, regarding their searches.



As detailed in the attachment, significant parts of the May 23 request are outstanding. The bulk of the priority items identified in the June 22 request have not been provided; DNA has, in essence, provided little or no data to date from its important records collections, <sup>1</sup> the Army has provided some important data (on Dugway intentional releases and the development of its ethics policy) but has provided limited further responses; DOD has agreed to respond expeditiously to declassification requests, but has not declassified any documents from the collection(s) designated as test cases for priority declassification. While the Navy and Air Force have provided limited Headquarters related documentation, we understand that they are searching for such materials and hope to obtain the fruits of their efforts shortly.

### *Search Strategy*

As discussed previously, following the Phase I identification of experiments, we turned in this phase to, 1) the identification of Headquarters level groups with responsibility for funding, coordinating, using, setting policy for, and/or advising on human radiation experiments; and 2) the retrieval of these documents. Following this effort, we hope to be better able to focus investigation on particular field sites and/or groups of experiments, from those identified previously.

Even in the brief period since the strategy was initiated, the materials uncovered demonstrate its value. For example, the materials on the 1949-53 (OSD Research and Development Board) Joint Panel on the Medical aspects of Atomic Warfare contain programmatic overviews showing the purpose of experiments, digests of experiments (showing funding, and including experiments sponsored by the Public Health Service and AEC), and continued discussions of human experimentation. However, there are important gaps in the Joint Panel materials. Moreover, even for the 1949-53 period we now know that there are other relevant groups whose documents have not been retrieved. Also, there has been essentially no retrieval of OSD documents from the post 1953 successor, and similar, groups. Service and DNA retrieval of documents from Headquarters files also has been limited.

Given what is currently known, the Headquarters search effort should now be able to proceed quickly to identify and retrieve documents through, at least, the 1974 period.

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<sup>1</sup> We note that the notes of the January, 1994 meeting of knowledgeable persons, which DNA provided, confirm that DNA has access to a rich body of information on human experimentation and intentional releases. For example, the meeting notes refer to at least a half dozen apparent intentional releases, and to data on "500 personnel who volunteered to occupy close-to-detonation positions during events," HUMPRO experiments (including in relation to the "1951 test") and provide many other leads. That is, the meeting confirms that important, relevant information exists, and should be retrievable.

### *Goals/Expectations Prior to Next Committee Meeting*

As further detailed in the attachment, we expect that **prior** to the Committee's next meeting on July 25th, the DOD will provide us with the following:

- 1) DNA and the Army's completed response to DOD's January search directive;
- 2) DOD's completed provision of responses to the May 23 letter and to the priority items identified in the June 22 letter,<sup>2</sup>
- 3) DNA and the Army's completed responses to the requests we made to them, pursuant to discussion and agreement, on June 8 and June 15;
- 4) Substantial inroads by OSD, DNA and the services into the identification of Headquarter-level R&D coordinating, budgeting, and policy groups which funded, managed, coordinated, requested, advised on or used radiation experimentation, and the retrieval of their documents--through 1974. This request is essentially a reiteration of what has been previously requested, which we restate because of its importance.

In the case of OSD, this task includes:

- a) Completion of provision of documents related to the development of the 1953 ethics policy, as detailed in the attachment;
- b) Completion of provision of documents related to the Joint Panel on the Medical Aspects of Atomic Warfare and Committee on Medical Science, as detailed in the attachment;
- c) Identification of the successors to the Joint Panel and the Committee on Medical Science, and retrieval of their documents;
- d) Identification of Defense Department Research and Engineering organizations which were involved in radiation research activities (as funders, coordinators, users, sponsors, advisors, policysetters, etc.), and retrieval of their relevant documents. As we discussed, DDR&E records are a likely source of documentation on many such organizations (such as the successors to the Joint Panel on the Medical Aspects of Atomic Warfare).

We also note that the minutes of the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute Board of Governors (AFRRI) indicate that, at least, the following should be important sources of data for DNA: the Weapons Effects Board; DNA Biomedical Weapons Effects Research Program; and Annual Long Range Planning Meeting for Medical Nuclear Weapons Effect Research.

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<sup>2</sup> Of course, in instances where it has been conclusively determined that documents do not exist (or have been destroyed), response to that effect would be sufficient.

5) DOD declassification of a significant number of the radwarfare documents from the collections identified in the June 22 letter.

6) Portions of "QRRs" for the period through 1974. As we discussed, we understand that R&D needs have periodically been identified by DOD components in documents termed "QRRs." We sought these documents from DNA, which reports that it only has the most current QRRs available. We therefore recast this request to you.

Finally, as we stated on July 8, currently available documentation suggests that human experimentation may have been conducted in connection with atomic bomb tests. At the last meeting the Committee expressed a strong interest in learning, as quickly and efficiently as possible, whether this was the case. Because of the import of this question we will cover it in a separate discussion.

In conclusion, the Headquarters documentation we have obtained so far shows that there are many identifiable and retrievable document collections at DOD dealing with actual or potential human radiation experimentation. While there is much to be done, DOI should now be able to achieve the rapid and efficient retrieval of the documents needed to tell the human experimentation story to the American people.

Sincerely,



Dan Guttman  
Executive Director

Attachment

cc: Christine Varney