

OFFICE ON ARMED SERVICES  
 COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE,  
 AND TECHNOLOGY

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0103**

January 11, 1993

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
 1221 LONGWORTH BUILDING  
 WASHINGTON, DC 20515-C  
 (202) 225-3281

DISTRICT OFFICES  
 104 FEDERAL BUILDING  
 POST OFFICE BOX 2042  
 ANNISTON, AL 36202  
 PHONE: 238-5655

107 FEDERAL BUILDING  
 OPELIKA, AL 36801  
 PHONE: 745-6221

115 EAST NORTHSIDE  
 TUSKEGEE, AL 36083  
 PHONE: 727-6480

The Honorable Bill Clinton  
 President-Elect of the U.S.  
 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW  
 Washington, D.C. 20270

Dear Mr. President-Elect:

Following last week's report by the National Academy of Sciences on chemical weapons testing carried out during World War II, I am calling upon you as incoming Commander-in-Chief to right the wrong that has been done to thousands of soldiers and civilians who were put at risk to the hazardous effects of mustard gas and other chemical munitions.

While the secret tests performed at several sites throughout the United States during World War II had significant value to our wartime research program, the revelations of abuse documented by the National Academy of Sciences study have tarnished that value.

We cannot undo what happened during World War II or decades of official denial and neglect, but we need to do more than just adjusting the disability claims bureaucracy and approaching this as business as usual. We need to right this wrong -- now!

Specifically, I am calling on you to: (1) recognize the contributions of the tested soldiers and apologize for the way they have been treated, (2) lift the veil of secrecy which still hinders full disclosure of the program, and (3) commit the resources of the Department of Defense and the Veterans Affairs Department to finding and helping these citizens.

Last week's report, entitled "Veterans at Risk: The Health Effects of Mustard Gas and Lewisite," revealed that 60,000 American soldiers were exposed to dangerous chemicals as part of secret research in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Utah, Illinois, North Carolina, Florida, Alabama, and Panama during World War II.

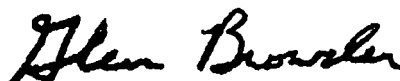
The Honorable Bill Clinton  
Page 2  
January 11, 1993

The soldiers were sworn to secrecy forever during the testing, and the government never officially acknowledged the program until 1991. The Veterans Administration then requested the National Institute of Medicine to conduct a study; and the resulting "Veterans at Risk" report is the first documentation of the extensive nature and problems of the program.

Besides the 60,000 soldiers participating in the secret research, the report indicates that many thousands of civilian personnel at defense installations in Maryland, Arkansas, Colorado and Alabama may have been exposed to the dangerous chemicals. In 1943 alone, 28,000 civilians were employed by the Chemical Warfare Service in the production and handling of chemical weapons; and the report cites a "dismal safety record" with a "quite high" number of injuries for the CWS.

I feel this issue warrants immediate attention following your inauguration on January 20.

Sincerely,



Glen Browder  
Member of Congress

GB/vfp