

BUMED-X-ELK:II
 A16-3/NN

1 August 1946

RCC1.960620.007

To: The Secretary of the Navy

Subj: Long-range, continued study of medical and biological effects of atomic bomb - request for.

Encl:

1. (HW) Summary Minutes of Conference of NRC, Division of Medical Sciences on Atomic Bomb Casualties, 24 June 1946, RESTRICTED.
2. (HW) Ltr from Lewis H. Feed, M.D., Chairman, Division of Medical Sciences, NRC to Surgeon General, U.S. Navy, dtd 28 June 1946.
3. (HW) Ltr from Surgeon General, U.S. Navy, to Lewis H. Feed, M.D., Chairman, Division of Medical Sciences, NRC, BUMED-X-ELK:II, A16-3/NN, dtd 24 July 1946.

1. At the earliest practicable date following the capitulation of Japan, scientific groups effected a survey of damage produced by the atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Medical scientists studied the effect on personnel. These observations were conducted under the auspices of the Army and Navy through the agencies of Manhattan District, NavTechJap, and hospital ship USS HAVEN. Observations as could be made were continued by the medical men of the army of occupation.

2. Demobilization and consequent loss of personnel engaged in this work prevents continuation of this most essential study.

3. Preliminary surveys noted in paragraph one include a population of about 14,000 Japanese who were exposed to the radiation of atomic fission. It is considered that this group offers an opportunity for study of utmost importance to the United States and mankind in general as regards the medical and biological effects of atomic radiation. Such a study should continue for a span of time as yet indeterminable. It is beyond the scope of military and naval affairs, involving as it does, humanity in general not only in war but in anticipated problems of peaceful industry. Pursuance of observation may be effected properly by American scientists themselves or by Japanese workers under American scientific supervision.

4. Enclosures one, two, and three review for the Secretary's information a recent joint National Research Council-Army-Navy conference on this subject and resulting action between NRC and this Bureau.

5. As outlined in enclosure one, paragraph C, sub-paragraph 1, it is respectfully and strongly requested that the Secretary take appropriate action toward the evolution of a Presidential Directive instructing the National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council, to institute a long range continuing study of the biological and medical effects of the atomic bomb, and authorizing the Council to utilize the aid as required of governmental and civilian agencies and personnel. It is further recommended that the formulation of plans and methods for this study be made a function of NRC, enabling an unhampered flexibility of action as may be determined by circumstances to be most appropriate.

Ross

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Chief of Bureau