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ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

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Office of Public Affairs

NOTE TO DR. LIVERMAN

George Wilson of the Washington Post, who wrote last week's story about the plutonium injection experiments, is preparing a story for the Saturday or Sunday Post about the AEC's testicular irradiation experiments. I have discussed the facts of these experiments with him in detail, and believe that he will handle the story in a relatively subdued and well-balanced manner.

As I discussed with you at the HS&T hearing today, Wilson wanted comments from you on ERDA's attitude toward this kind of experiment, and on the need for medical surveillance of the prisoners involved. I read to him the attached quotes, which you reviewed and approved at the hearing.

Phil Garon
OPA

cc: Al Alibrando

Feb. 27, 1976

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FOLDER HUMAN EXPOSURES FOR OTTINGER COMMITTEE

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(On ERDA's attitude toward the experiments)

"It is, and will continue to be, ERDA's policy to try to learn as much as possible from the experience of humans who have been subjected to radiation through accidental or occupational exposure. However, it is difficult to imagine circumstances under which ERDA's need for information would be so compelling as to warrant experiments involving the irradiation of humans for the sole or primary purpose of studying effects.

"If an occasion were to arise in which information on radiation effects was desperately needed to protect national health and safety, and there were no other way to obtain such information, it is conceivable that ERDA might consider using human subjects. In that event, ERDA would strictly adhere to the prevailing national guidelines for such experiments.

"I would like to emphasize, however, that the possibility for future ERDA involvement in such studies is extremely remote."

(On medical follow-ups)

"ERDA recognizes the need for additional medical surveillance of prisoners involved in both the Oregon and Washington radiation experiments, which were funded by the Atomic Energy Commission. We are exploring various methods to carry out these medical follow-ups most effectively. Certain details still remain, and these will have to be resolved with Oregon and Washington state prison officials."