

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

JK

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

March 7, 1966

R

MEMORANDUM FOR GOVERNOR VAL PETERSON



Subject: Human Effects of Nuclear Weapons Development

I have studied your memorandum of February 23 containing a preliminary plan for the projected study on the above subject, and have secured the views of Messrs. Lay, Gleason and others of the NSC Staff. Our review has more than confirmed my initial impression that your thinking has added very significantly to the concept, and your memorandum is indeed a splendid piece of work.

I shall try in this memorandum to bring into focus the reaction here to your study and at the same time to bring to your attention the impression that I have gained as to the President's desires in several conversations with him.

In the first place let me say that we would accept, and be prepared to join with you in recommending to the President the acceptance of, your plan. Thus I shall limit my comments to the respects in which I would suggest modification or changes in your approach.

The first question relates to the first paragraph on page 3. I think your expression, "planned leadership positions of the several nations involved," calls for some clarification; in fact, it may be that the clause in which this language appears could be eliminated if you accept a change I shall make later on in this memorandum.

As to the second paragraph on page 3, I express some doubt as to whether this is a contingency that needs to be considered in the type of study in question. It may be that this can be recognized as a factor to be taken into account by governments at the policy level, but I am wondering if we could not further limit the scope of the study by elimination of this as a factor in relation to paragraph 1-2 of the directive.

While fully agreeing with the content of the balance of page 3 and all of page 4, I wonder whether it would not be desirable to add a further note following the last sentence on page 4 which suggests focus on the "laboratory nearest at hand -- the people of the United States." While this focus is obviously necessary, it seems to me that

COPY FOR MR ANDERSON
MR LAY
MR GLEASON ✓
MR JOHNSON
MR WHEAT

~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, SEC. 3.4 (b)

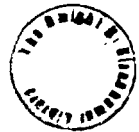
MR 85-483 # 16
BY DJH DATE 8/29/85

Governor Peterson

~~TOP SECRET~~

TOP SECRET

2/7/52



the study should also take into account any available historical precedents (whether in war or natural disaster) which might shed light on the subject. While I recognize that such historical precedents as for example the British and German experiences during World War II (and indeed all others) were on a much smaller scale than is contemplated in this study, it might be possible to draw useful conclusions as to "human effects" which might be extrapolated into this study.

I raise next the question as to the annexes relating to groups of nations proposed at the top of page 5. It seems to me this would greatly elaborate the scope of the paper, probably delay the completion of the study and turn over to single individual area experts the elaboration of the study in respects which could better be done in government. In other words, once the basic paper is completed it could be studied further by the experts in State and CIA, and perhaps elsewhere in government, who could add to the basic study their comments in relation to the several areas in question.

Next, it seems to me that your list of participants in the study by categories or professions is good. The President, however, indicated that he wanted at least one retired military officer to participate in the work.

Coming to the bottom of page 6, where you suggest a group of individuals specialized in the study of countries or groups: this could be changed if you go along with my earlier suggestion that the study not be so broad as to include the development of estimates by country or area.

As to the briefings of the group referred to in paragraph 7, it is my suggestion that no elaborate exposure of the details would be required. Approached on a "need-to-know" basis, I should think that there is in the public domain perhaps 99% of all that need be considered by such a group, and I knew this will be consistent with the wishes of the President and the Defense Department that there be no more classified information included in the briefing than is necessary.

The second full paragraph on page 8 would go out if we find we are in agreement about limiting the study to the general one and leaving the development of the area or country estimate to existing government agencies.

Under the heading of other considerations, I think we should be very sure that either the Macy Foundation or such organization as is picked is a competent and secure one. Any look as to the scope and

*"briefings" added in previous G
See cover memo*

No change in G

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~



Governor Peterson

- 2 -

2/7/56

purpose of the study could lead to loose talk which could do great harm. The Joint Chiefs have expressed particular apprehension on this ground, and you know the President's views about such things. I have an idea as to how this may be handled, and perhaps it would be best for us to discuss it.

May I suggest that after you have considered the foregoing comments and are ready to talk about them you let me know! We might then get together again to try to settle any remaining questions as to the form. Thereafter, I propose that we carry our joint recommendations to the President.

DILLON ANDERSON
Special Assistant
to the President

DA/JC/JSL/L

~~TOP SECRET~~