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Honorable Irving H. Ives
United States Senate

Dear Senator Ives:

This is in reply to your September 16, 1953 referral of a letter dated September 12, 1953 which you had received from Mr. H. H. Shell of New York City.

There is attached herewith a report I have had prepared in answer to the questions raised in Mr. Shell's letter to you. I sincerely trust that the information supplied will serve to answer Mr. Shell's questions and also will assure him that the Commission is doing everything within its power to safeguard the welfare of the public in all aspects from fall-out from atomic weapons tests.

As you have requested, I am returning Mr. Shell's letter to you.

Sincerely yours,

SIGNED AND
INITIALED

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Lewis L. Strauss
Chairman

Enclosures:
Report (in duplicate)
Letter dated September 12,
1953 from Mr. Shell

CC: Chairman
CC: General Manager
2CC: Cong. Comm. Sec.

13-147
DUNNING/CLAUS/O'NEILL:emr

MEDICINE, HEALTH & SAFETY

| OFFICE | Adm. | Bioph. | Exec. Officer | Director | Cong. Comm. | Gen. Manager | Chairman |
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| SURNAME | O'Neill | <i>MC</i> | <i>KL</i> | <i>JCS</i> | | <i>JM</i> | <i>IS</i> |
| DATE | <i>Ron</i> | 9/29 | 9-29-53 | 10/1/53 | <i>W. Dunning</i> | | |

10/2/53

Report: For the Honorable Irving M. Ives, regarding inquiry from Mr. H. H. Shell concerning radioactive fall-out from continental weapons tests.

Prepared by: Division of Biology and Medicine

Reference: Referral dated September 16, 1953 from the Honorable Irving M. Ives to the Atomic Energy Commission, transmitting letter dated September 12, 1953 from Mr. H. H. Shell, New York City.

Mr. Shell in his letter requests further information concerning conduct of the weapons test program at the Nevada Proving Grounds. Specifically, Mr. Shell makes inquiry concerning four points:

1. The identity of the reprint furnished Mr. Shell as an attachment to our reply to previous correspondence from Mr. Shell in August 1953;
2. Information on long-term and cumulative effects of radiological fall-out;
3. By whom the tests of fall-out were made, and the nature of such tests; and
4. The nature of the recommendations on radiological exposure as made by the National Committee on Radiation Protection and the International Commission on Radiological Protection.

The reprint we sent earlier to Mr. Shell was Part Three of the Commission's Thirteenth Semiannual Report to Congress. The reprint, for identification purposes, was entitled "Continental Weapons Tests... Public Safety" and was the reprint referred to in Mr. Strauss's letter of August 11, 1953.

Pages 44 through 49 of the previously mentioned reprint summarized data developed from various experimental studies of the accumulation of radioactive fall-out resulting from continental weapons tests.

These studies on long-term, as well as immediate, effects of radiological fall-out have been conducted by scientists in Atomic Energy Commission laboratories and in cooperation with U.S. Public Health Service, U.S. Weather Bureau, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. Such

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Report:
For the Honorable
Irving M. Ives

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studies are continuing, but there is no evidence whatsoever that long-term effects are approaching a hazardous level or that they will become appreciable as a result of any foreseeable future experimental test.

The assurances given in the reprint are based on the evaluation of fall-out data from past test series using the recommendations of the National Committee on Radiation Protection and the International Commission on Radiological Protection as the criteria for judgment. These recommendations and the composition of the committees are contained in two booklets which are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D.C. These are:

National Bureau of Standards Handbook No. 47
"Recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection and of the International Commission on Radiological Units, 1950." (15¢)

National Bureau of Standards Handbook No. 52
"Maximum Permissible Amounts of Radioisotopes in the Human Body and Maximum Permissible Concentrations in Air and Water." (20¢)

Insofar as it is possible to answer questions regarding long- and short-term effects of fall-out, the Commission did so in its Thirteenth Semiannual Report to Congress. We believe that if Mr. Shall will re-read carefully the section referred to in the reprint, together with material available in the handbooks described, he will be reassured as to the safety of atomic weapons tests conducted within the continental limits.

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