

James C. Hagerty, Press Secretary to the President

407753

THE WHITE HOUSE

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Lewis L. Strauss  
Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission

The distinguished and representative group of American scientists whose names are appended to the attached document have notified me that they endorse it in their individual capacities.

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The question of the development and testing of nuclear weapons can be divided into two components: first - disarmament, and second - fears of radioactive fallout.

With respect to disarmament, the Administration of President Eisenhower has certainly made, and continues to make, the most vigorous efforts to bring about international agreement on a system of disarmament which would eliminate or reduce the production and testing of nuclear weapons. Until such an agreement is obtained, with guarantees which protect the American people and the peoples of the free world, we have no prudent course except to continue the development and testing of the most modern weapons of defense.

With respect to radioactive fallout from nuclear explosions, the most authoritative information available on this subject is to be found in the recent study conducted by the National Academy of Sciences. This study was independent of the Government and was generally confirmed by a separate study made by the British Medical Research Council and reported to Parliament. Both studies concluded that the unavoidable exposure to cosmic rays, normal radioactivity in the soil and medical use of X-rays very greatly exceeded the exposure that results from the tests of weapons, even assuming such tests are continued into the future at the present rate.

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We regret the injection into a political campaign of statements and conclusions which extend beyond the limits of existing scientific evidence. Such scientific matters of vital importance can only be evaluated by calm deliberations.

Dr. Roger Adams  
Head of Chemistry Department  
University of Illinois

Dr. John Bugher  
Director of Medical Education  
and Public Health of the  
Rockefeller Foundation

Dr. Jesse W. Beams  
Professor of Physics  
University of Virginia



Dr. John Dunning  
Dean of Engineering  
Columbia University

Dr. G. Failla  
Director of Radiological Research  
Laboratory of the College of  
Physicians and Surgeons  
Columbia University

Dr. T. Keith Glennan  
President, Case Institute

Dr. Carroll Hochwalt, Chemist

Dr. Warren C. Johnson  
Director of Physical Sciences  
University of Chicago

Dr. Mervin J. Kelly  
President, Bell Laboratories

Dr. Eger V. Murphree  
President, Esso Research & Engineering Co.

Dr. C. P. Rhoads  
Director of Memorial Hospital  
and the Sloan-Kettering Institute

Dr. J. C. Warner  
President, Carnegie Institute of Technology