

UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

June 13, 1956

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Dear Mr. President:

A distinguished committee of medical people and other scientists, with whom we have been cooperating for about a year, has made a report on the effects of radiation on human beings. The report was published today with misleading headlines in the Washington-Post and I am, therefore, writing this letter to you by way of reassurance.

The Report states that:

"There has been concern about the possible genetic harm due to the fall-out of radioactive material which results from the testing of atomic weapons. ... the fall-out dose to date (and its continuing value if it is assumed that the weapons testing program will not be substantially increased) is a small one as compared with the background radiation, or as compared with the average exposure in the United States to medical X rays."

The mathematical conclusion of the study is that results of weapons tests to date and projected into the future at the same rate, will result in a radiation exposure of the United States population of a minimum of 1/300 and a maximum of 1/14 of the exposure to radiation which is presently received from normal background (i.e. cosmic rays, radioactivity in normal earth and air, etc.) and from medical X-rays. These findings support the public statement which I made in February of last year.

Respectfully,

Lewis Strauss



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The President
The White House

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