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DIRECTORATE STATUS

FROM: BERRY, R. Stephen: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TO: DR. D.A. BROMLEY

TO JTR
FYI

DATE OF
CORRESPONDENCE: 03/31/92

SUBJECT: HE IS FORWARDING HIS IDEAS ON NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
IN THE FSU, AND ASKS FOR DR. BROMLEY'S ADVICE.

DIRECTORATE

ASSIGNED: INTERNATIONAL/POLICY

STAFF

ASSIGNED:

Karl G. G. to file
5/26 KAE

The costs are upwards of \$20 billion. I believe a program to enhance safety of existing reactors is more realistic than one to replace them.

ACTION

REQUIRED: FOR DAB'S SIGNATURE

STAFF

ACTION:

SENDER'S DUE DATE:

OSTP DUE DATE: 04/20/92

STAFF DUE DATE

DATE COMPLETED:

DATE COMPLETED/DEPT:

COPIES TO: D. Allan Bromley
PHYSICAL SCIENCES

WHITE HOUSE TRACKING #:

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REMARKS:

OSTP RECEIVED: 04/06/92

FILE: P-INTERNATIONAL-USSR

DEPT RECEIVED:

CENTRAL FILES:

Sent copy to T.J.R. 5/28.

135 A

R. Stephen Berry
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RECEIVED
92 APR 6 4 19:42
31 March 1992

Dr. D. Allan Bromley
Assistant to the President for Science and Technology
Executive Office of the President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

DSTP
MAIL ROOM

Dear Allan:

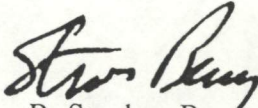
After the meeting at the National Academy concerning the future of the science enterprise in the "FSU" (which I hope was helpful to you), I had some thoughts that I've raised with some of the people here and would now like to pass on to you. These notions go well outside the sphere of the science and technology community. I am coming to you for your judgment and, if the ideas merit further exploration, for advice about where and to whom to go next.

The issue is the former Soviet Union's electrical generation system. We have been impressed—or depressed—about the number of Chernobyl-type power stations whose owners can afford neither to repair nor replace them. Yet we also know what a potential danger every one of them is. Would it not be to everyone's benefit if those power stations were replaced by safe, modern generating stations? The notion that I've been discussing with people such as Alan Schriesheim and Stuart Rice, and have written about to Senator Simon and a couple of people at the NAS, is this: would it be conceivable that the United States and other nations, particularly those threatened by any future Chernobyl-like accident and with technology to build modern power plants, and possibly institutions such as the World Bank, make loans to the former Soviet States for the specific purpose of replacing the Chernobyl-type plants as rapidly as feasible? I envision long-term loans, perhaps loans whose repayment would not begin until after 20 or 25 years. Furthermore, a suggestion Stuart Rice made was that the contracts for the new plants might divide the work between the recipient country and the lending country, so that employment would be stimulated in both. In my view, it would not make much difference whether the new plants use gas or nuclear energy, and I'd think of starting with the supposition that the people whose plants they would be are the people who should make the choice. But this gets into second-level details that should probably be examined only after the idea is considered for its overall worth.

Perhaps the notion is so obvious that it is already being discussed in Washington. If so, I'd be pleased and relieved. If not, and if it is flawed in a way I have missed, I would like to know. But if it might have merit and be worth exploring, I would be delighted to do what I can to help it along. Alan Schriesheim suggested that Henry Linden might be helpful in discussing it, and I'll try to reach him. People from Bechtel, Fluor, Mitsubishi and other power plant builders would clearly be interested, but wouldn't the idea be much more acceptable and plausible if it comes from those with only a diffuse, long-term self-interest, rather than those who would profit most directly? Hence I would, perhaps naively, avoid those firms until others have thought the idea through.

In any event, if you wish to carry this forward, please do. If you think I should take it to specific people, I'd appreciate that advice. It seems to me that "if it were done, 'tis best that it be done quickly."

Hoping to see you at the NAS garden party,


R. Stephen Berry