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TYPE: ACTION DOCUMENT NUMBER: 9202578
ORIGINATOR: 02 STATUS I DIRECTORATE STATUS *file*

FROM: ENGLISH, George T.

TO: DR. D.A. BROMLEY *ALL SC 12*

DATE OF
CORRESPONDENCE: 07/21/92

SUBJECT: HE IS WRITING WITH HIS COMMENTS ON THE EARTHQUAKES
IN CALIFORNIA.

DIRECTORATE STAFF
ASSIGNED: PHYSICAL SCIENCES ASSIGNED:

ACTION STAFF
REQUIRED: AS/IF NECESSARY ACTION:

SENDER'S DUE DATE:
OSTP DUE DATE: 08/07/92 STAFF DUE DATE
DATE COMPLETED: DATE COMPLETED/DEPT: *8/4/92*

COPIES TO: D. Allan Bromley

WHITE HOUSE TRACKING #: CONTACT PERSON:
PHONE: EXT:

REMARKS: *Dr. Esh forwarded letter to FCCS ET*

OSTP RECEIVED: 07/24/92 DEPT RECEIVED:
FILE: P-PHYSICAL SCIENCES

CENTRAL FILES: - *FCCS ET - GENERAL*

25 18

RECEIVED

3508 Woodridge Avenue,
Silver Spring, MD 20902-2349
Tuesday, July 21, 1992

92 JUL 24 10 28

Dr. Allen Bromley
Advisor to the President
for Science and Technology
Old Executive Office Building
17th & Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20506

MAILED 11

Dear Dr. Bromley:

I am writing to you about an idea which occurred to me when I read the 10 July 1992 issue of Science Magazine. On page 155, an article titled "Ominous Pattern Looms in California Earthquakes" describes the concern of seismologists about the Coachella Valley segment of the San Andreas fault.

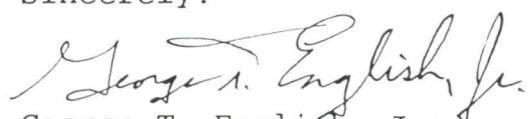
In other publications, I noticed estimates of perhaps 20,000 dead and injured persons in the Southern California region as a consequence of the forthcoming "big one". All the experts seem to agree that "it" will occur within the next decade or so.

My thought is "why should the nation wait for the inevitable to occur with the attendant massive human casualty toll when deliberate intervention might preclude these losses?" Specifically, I think that the "big one" could be deliberately triggered in advance of nature's timetable through the use of simultaneous nuclear detonations in drilled shafts placed every kilometer or thereabouts along critical sections of the San Andreas fault. In much the same way that avalanches are controlled in mountainous regions, the forthcoming earthquake could be triggered at a time when it would cause no loss of life. With adequate planning and advance preparations, evacuation of children, the elderly, and others could be accomplished before the event in addition to the completion of timely property damage mitigation measures such as the turning off of utility services and the buttressing of critical structures.

Politically, such an idea might seem preposterous, but the scientific community has the obligation to educate the populace about this hazard and develop a means to mitigate the human suffering that would result. I believe that former Surgeon General Koop's anti-smoking campaign is an outstanding example of scientific leadership in the public interest despite the personal criticism he experienced.

Thank you for your attention to this "suggestion"!

Sincerely:


George T. English, Jr.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

August 4, 1992

Dear Dr. English:

Thank you for your letter in which you discuss the possibility of triggering earthquakes through the use of controlled nuclear detonations. I am forwarding your letter to a Federal interagency committee which has been addressing the entire issue of naturally occurring hazards, for their information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl A. Erb', written in a cursive style.

Karl A. Erb
Associate Director for
Physical Sciences and Engineering

Dr. George T. English, Jr.
3508 Woodridge Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20902-2349

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20500

August 4, 1992

Dear Dr. Sutton:

I am attaching a letter sent by George T. English to Dr. Bromley concerning advance triggering of earthquakes by nuclear detonations. Would you please forward it to the appropriate FCCSET working group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Karl", written over the printed name "Karl Erb".

**Karl Erb
Associate Director
for Physical Sciences and Engineering**

Attachment

**Dr. Vickie Sutton
Assistant Director
for Science Councils**