

210
OEOB

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date 7/25

To: Elizabeth

From: The Staff Secretary

See
USA
Today

As discussed.

Tara's number is

586-6151.

Keep me posted.

Don





DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
Washington, DC 20585

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION SHEET

To	ANN MCGUIRE (CHRIS BALDERSTON)	From	LIZ MONTOLA
Office		Date	JULY 24, 1997
Fax Number	456-2525	Fax Number	202/586-7644
Office Number		Office Number	202/586-6210

Comments:

PER CONVERSATION

- Models follow patterns across U
- grass → cow ^{milk} → kid → consumer I-BI
- Nevada test sites — RECA addresses / compensates people in the same ball park
- cover most of Continental US. Don't know risk / health effects
- NOT viable means for testing people for possible thyroid disease.
- Methods articles — peer-reviewed coming on line since 1990.

Pages: 8, including this cover sheet.

chief, Radiarm Effs. Bruce Wickscholz

IF TRANSMITTAL IS INCOMPLETE, PLEASE PHONE CAROLYN AT 202/586-6210.

Eden Lums using it to support comprehensive test bank.
Recognize uncertainty ^{in-life} and learn from them

Military Production Network

*A national alliance of organizations working to address issues
of nuclear weapons production and waste clean-up*

July 23, 1997

9-102
American Family Service Connection
Denver, CO

Other Alert
Los Angeles, NY

Coalition for Health Concerns
Boston, NY

Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety
Santa Fe, NM

Environmental Defense Institute
Troy, NY

Federal Headquarters for Environmental
Safety and Health
Rice, OH

Global Resource Action Center for
the Environment

Government Accountability Project
Seattle, WA
Washington, DC

Education Action League
Tampa, FL

Heart of America Northwest
Seattle, WA

Los Alamos Study Group
Santa Fe, NM

Midwest Environmental Safety &
Health
Middletown, OH

Nuclear Alternatives for a Clean
Environment

Residents in Need
Troy, NY

San Diego Environmental
Forum Alliance
San Diego, CA

Portland Area Neighbors &
Lawmakers (PANAL)
Portland, OR

Peace Action Education Fund
Washington, DC
Hastings, TX

Peace Farm
Portland, TX

Physicians for Social Responsibility
Washington, DC

Portsmouth/Portsmouth Residents for
Environmental Safety & Security
Portsmouth, NH

Rocky Mountain Peace and
Justice Center
Boulder, CO

Texas Action
Nuclear Oversight (TANO)
Austin, TX

Unity River Alliance
Salem, OR

Verde River Research and
Information Center
Albuquerque, NM

Valley CARES (Concerned Action
and Research Environmental)
Livermore, CA

Western State Legal Foundation
Oakland, CA

Women's Action for New Orleans
Baton Rouge, LA

Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health
and Human Services
Federico Peña, Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Shalala and Secretary Peña:

On behalf of many Americans who may have suffered long-term health effects, we urge you to make public immediately data now in the hands of the Radiation Effects Branch of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) providing evidence that children exposed to radioactive Iodine-131 from U.S. atmospheric testing during the 1951-1962 period were put at significantly increased risk for thyroid cancer and other thyroid diseases.

As citizens and physicians who have organized to examine the impact of activities within the U.S. nuclear weapons complex, we are profoundly troubled by NCI's handling of this important study. Fourteen years ago, in 1983, Public Law 97-414 ordered the collection of fallout exposure data on a county-by-county basis. Yet, to this day, NCI officials have failed to release the material in their possession that would allow the public, health experts, policymakers and the media to begin assessing the impacts of these exposures.

Once it became clear to researchers at NCI that there were numerous fallout hotspots across the nation and, therefore, many plausible scenarios for thyroid exposures above the 10 rad level that could produce adverse health impacts, action should have been taken to evaluate what medical monitoring and intervention was necessary to deal with the potential consequences.

This episode is particularly troublesome because it comes so soon after the Department of Energy's commendable efforts to address the troublesome history of government complicity in human radiation experiments. An apology was made, and lessons were supposedly learned and put into place.

Now, we face another situation in which government scientists have possessed evidence of significant public radiation risks -- and done nothing. This is profoundly unacceptable.

... continued

As leaders of the relevant federal agencies, you have the moral and legal responsibility to act on these issues.

Specifically we call on you to:

- immediately release the county-by-county data on Iodine-131 exposure from nuclear weapons testing that is now in the hands of senior National Cancer Institute administrators;
- set up mechanisms for an independent assessment of the risk to the public from these radioactive releases and to provide relevant medical care to those who face health risks from exposure;
- work with President Clinton to create an official body to investigate the circumstances surrounding the cover-up of this data and to make recommendations for policy changes to a Cabinet-level authority, such as the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group.

We look forward to your prompt response to these important concerns which may impact the lives of many Americans.

Sincerely,

Susan Gordon

Susan Gordon
Director
Military Production Network

Robert Musil

Robert Musil
Executive Director
Physicians for Social Responsibility

PSR**PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

1101 Fourteenth Street Northwest Suite 700 Washington DC 20005

telephone (404) 898-0150 facsimile (404) 898-0178

NEWS ALERT**PHYSICIANS CHALLENGE GOVERNMENT COVER-UP:
CALL FOR RELEASE, INVESTIGATION OF RADIATION DATA**Washington, DC
July 23, 1997**CONTACT:**
Robert Tiller
Lisa Ledwidge
202-898-0150

In a letter sent today to Secretary of Energy Federico Pena and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) called for immediate release of a long suppressed study in the hands of the Radiation Effects Branch of the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The NCI study, ordered by Public Law 97-414 fourteen years ago reveals that baby boomers exposed as children to radioactive fallout from open-air nuclear testing from 1951 to 1962 were put at significantly increased risk for thyroid cancer and other thyroid diseases.

"Someone is playing politics with the public's health and it has got to stop," said Robert K. Musil, Ph.D., Executive Director of the 20,000 member physician-led organization that was founded in 1961 to inform the public of the dangers of radiation from nuclear weapons and testing and which won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1985. The NCI study reportedly details a number of fallout hot spots around the nation where exposure levels to radioactive Iodine-131 from fallout exceeded the level of 10 rads that can produce adverse health effects.

"There is an ethical imperative for government officials to take action to prevent health dangers and to notify the public about them." According to Dr. Musil, "there is absolutely no excuse for this sort of Cold War cover-up in 1997."

In addition to prompt release of the NCI study, PSR is calling for the creation of formal mechanisms to assess the risk to the public from these radioactive releases and to provide relevant medical care to those who face health risks from exposures.

PSR is also willing to work with, and calls upon, President Clinton to create an official body similar to the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the cover-up of this data and to recommend policy changes to a Cabinet-level authority, such as the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group.

Military Production Network

*A national alliance of organizations working to address issues
of nuclear weapons production and waste clean-up*

for further information:
Bob Schaeffer (617) 489-0461

for immediate release, Thursday, July 24, 1997

GROUPS SEEK RELEASE OF SECRET NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE STUDY SHOWING HIGH RADIOACTIVE IODINE EXPOSURE FROM NUCLEAR TESTS; CALL ON SECS. SHALALA AND PÉNA TO MAKE DATA PUBLIC, MONITOR HEALTH IMPACTS, INVESTIGATE COVER-UP

Leaders of groups representing communities near U.S. nuclear weapons facilities and physicians concerned about radiation exposure today called on top Clinton Administration officials to make public a National Cancer Institute (NCI) study they say provides "evidence that children exposed to radioactive Iodine-131 from U.S. atmospheric testing during the 1951-1962 period were put at significantly increased risk for thyroid cancer and other thyroid diseases."

In a letter to Secretary of Human Services Donna Shalala and Secretary of Energy Federico PÉna, the Military Production Network (MPN) and Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) charged, "NCI officials have failed to release the material in their possession that would allow the public, health experts, policymakers and the media to begin assessing the impacts of these exposures."

In addition to immediate release of the data, the groups called on Shalala and PÉna to set up mechanisms for an independent assessment of the risk to the public from the radioactive releases, provide medical care to those who face health risks from exposure, and work with President Clinton to create an official body "to investigate the cover-up of this data and to make recommendations for policy changes."

Congress ordered the collection of county-by-county data on radiation exposure fourteen years ago, in 1983. According to MPN and PSR, the NCI data show "there were numerous fallout hotspots across the nation and, therefore, many plausible scenarios for thyroid exposures above the 10 rad level that could produce adverse health impacts." In April 1996, the Advisory Committee on Energy-Related Epidemiologic Research (ACERER), which advises the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on federal radiation health studies, made a formal request to NCI to obtain the unpublished data on thyroid doses. To date, NCI has not released the information.

The letter from MPN and PSR notes: "This episode is particularly troublesome because it comes so soon after the Department of Energy's commendable efforts to address the troublesome history of government complicity in human radiation experiments. An apology

was made, and lessons were supposedly learned and put into place. Now we face another situation in which government scientists have possessed evidence of significant public radiation risks — and done nothing. This is profoundly unacceptable."

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a copy of the full MPN/PSR letter is available on request

Physicians Call for Release, Investigation of Radiation Data

To: National Desk, Health Writer

Contact: Robert Tiller or Lisa Ledwidge, 202-898-0150, both of Physicians for Social Responsibility

WASHINGTON, July 23 /U.S. Newswire/ -- In a letter sent today to Secretary of Energy Federico Pena and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) called for immediate release of a long-suppressed study in the hands of the Radiation Effects Branch of the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

The NCI study, ordered by Public Law 97-414 fourteen years ago reveals that baby boomers exposed as children to radioactive fallout from open-air nuclear testing from 1951 to 1962 were put at significantly increased risk for thyroid cancer and other thyroid diseases.

"Someone is playing politics with the public's health and it has got to stop," said Robert K. Musil, Ph.D., executive director of the 20,000-member physician-led organization that was founded in 1961 to inform the public of the dangers of radiation from nuclear weapons and testing and which won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1985. The NCI study reportedly details a number of fallout hotspots around the nation where exposure levels to radioactive Iodine-131 from fallout exceeded the level of 10 rads that can produce adverse health effects.

"There is an ethical imperative for government officials to take action to prevent health dangers and to notify the public about them." According to Musil, "There is absolutely no excuse for this sort of Cold War cover-up in 1997."

In addition to prompt release of the NCI study, PSR is calling for the creation of formal mechanisms to assess the risk to the public from these radioactive releases and to provide relevant medical care to those who face health risks from exposures.

PSR is also willing to work with, and calls upon, President Clinton to create an official body similar to the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the cover-up of this data and to recommend policy changes to a Cabinet-level authority, such as the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group.

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[Federico&Pena]

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Officials attack government agency about delay of fallout report

By PAUL SLOCA
 Associated Press Writer

STOUX FALLS, S. D. (AP) — Two nuclear industry watchdog groups on Wednesday asked two Cabinet secretaries to make public a long-delayed government study on radiation exposure from nuclear tests in the 1950s.

The Military Production Network and Physicians for Social Responsibility wrote U.S. Energy Secretary Federico Pena and Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, asking that the National Cancer Institute study be released.

They say the cancer institute is part of the Department of Health and Human Services & has for years withheld information about radiation exposure millions of Americans received from the tests, even though evidence suggests the releases may be linked to thyroid cancer.

"This is appalling that the National Cancer Institute did not make this available as soon as possible. It's been too long sitting on this," said Arjun Makhijani, president of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research.

"The thyroid doses to children who were around in the 1950s and drinking milk almost throughout the United States are much, much greater than previously thought," said Makhijani, who has seen some of the data.

About 1,200 cases of thyroid cancer are diagnosed each year in the United States.

The ongoing study, begun in 1983, looks at the dispersal of radioactive iodine-131 from nuclear weapons tests in Nevada between 1951 and 1958. The material was carried by prevailing winds and deposited, sometimes by rainfall, in much of the continental United States and parts of Canada.

Much of the criticism of NCI inaction on releasing information has been aimed at Bruce Wachholz, who heads the institute's Radiation Effects Branch.

Wachholz said on Wednesday that he hopes to have the report released by the end of September. He also confirmed that officials at the Energy Department have received some study results.

"We certainly will release the report as soon as we can," Wachholz said.

One person not happy about the delay is Sen. Tom Daschle, D-S.D., who was instrumental two months ago in pressuring NCI to discuss the study's status.

"I think somebody has some explaining to do," the Senate minority leader said Wednesday by phone from Washington. "I am extremely concerned about the slow progress of the study."

The watchdog organizations' letter also asks President

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Clinton to form a group to "investigate the cover-up of this data and to make recommendations for policy changes."

Susan Gordon, director of the Military Production Network and a co-author of the letter, said the NCI apparently is unwilling to deal with the legacy of nuclear tests.

"I think that this points out that the agency is still run by old warriors (and) the Cold War mentality is still deeply entrenched in these agencies," Gordon said on Wednesday.