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FBC-FALLOUT; 330

URGENT

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) - A SEPT. 26 NUCLEAR BOMB TEST IN CHINA HAS PRODUCED RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT "IN SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OVER PENNSYLVANIA," STATE OFFICIALS SAID TODAY.

THOMAS M. GERUSKY, HEAD OF THE STATE BUREAU OF RADIOLOGICAL HEALTH, SAID WEEKEND RAINFALL HELPED PRODUCE THE FALLOUT, AND A SPOKESMAN FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION IN WASHINGTON CONFIRMED THE FALLOUT.

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY HAD PROJECTED THE FALLOUT FOR PENNSYLVANIA AFTER A NUCLEAR BLAST OCCURRED AT THE LOP NOR TESTING SITE IN WESTERN CHINA.

GERUSKY WARNED PENNSYLVANIANS TO CAREFULLY WASH GARDEN VEGETABLES BEFORE EATING THEM AND HE SAID THERE MIGHT BE DANGEROUSLY HIGH RADIOACTIVE LEVELS IN MILK.

HE SAID HIGH LEVELS OF RADIOACTIVITY WERE FOUND IN VARIOUS SAMPLES OF DIRT, VEGETATION AND RAIN WATER. HE SAID THE RAINFALL HAD BROUGHT RADIOACTIVE PARTICLES FROM THE ATMOSPHERE TO THE GROUND.

GERUSKY SAID THE RADIATION LEVELS WERE THE HIGHEST IN PENNSYLVANIA IN MANY YEARS. TESTS HAVE BEGUN TO SEE IF FURTHER PROTECTIVE STEPS ARE NEEDED, HE SAID.

A MAJOR DANGER INVOLVES THE LEVEL OF IODINE-131 IN MILK, HE INDICATED. THE RADIOACTIVE ISOTOPE GATHERS ON GRASS, IS INGESTED BY CATTLE AND CAN BE CONCENTRATED IN THE MILK.

THE FALLOUT WAS FIRST DETECTED BY THE PHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC CO.'S RADIATION MONITORING PROGRAM AT THE PEACH BOTTOM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT NEAR THE PENNSYLVANIA-MARYLAND LINE.

AFTER THE ORIGINAL FINDING, THE COMPANY TOOK THE EXTRAORDINARY STEP OF HALTING CONSTRUCTION WORK AT THE PLANT MONDAY. COMPANY OFFICIALS APPARENTLY FEARED THE HIGH RADIATION LEVELS WERE DUE TO LOCAL PROBLEMS.

THE RADIATION FINDINGS WERE ALSO VERIFIED BY TESTS CONDUCTED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND BY THE RADIATION MONITORING PROGRAM AT THE THREE MILE ISLAND NUCLEAR PLANT NEAR HARRISBURG.

1234PES 10-05

Flash
PRECEDENCE

Uncles
CLASSIFICATION

FOR COMMCENTER USE ONLY

FROM: Jim Connor

DEX _____

DAC 112

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TO: Dick Cheney

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PAGES 5

TTY _____

CITE _____

INFO: Brent Scowcroft
Mike Duval

DTG: 061926Z

RELEASED BY: [Signature]

TOR: 061938Z

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:



1976 OCT 6 19 26

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 6, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY
FROM: JIM CAVANAUGH
SUBJECT: Fallout from the Chinese Nuclear
Test

This is the report the President requested last night.

cc: Brent Scowcroft
Mike Duval

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 6, 1976



MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

JIM CANNON *John Queen*

SUBJECT:

Fallout from the Chinese Nuclear Test

This is to report on the fallout from the Chinese Nuclear Test on September 26, 1976.

Three agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Energy Research and Development Administration were monitoring the fallout situation and stepped up their activities as soon as abnormally high concentrations were detected in Pennsylvania.

The agencies report:

1. The levels of radiation detected thus far are well below acceptable levels and therefore there is no danger to the public health.
2. Intensive monitoring activities are continuing but all agencies involved believe that the highest concentrations have already occurred and that the levels will decline rapidly and return to normal within a few days.

More details are provided in the attachment.

Attachment

RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT



- . The cloud from the September 26 test crossed the Pacific and entered the atmosphere over British Columbia about September 30. At least part of the cloud passed over the Chicago area and then into the Middle Atlantic region.
- . The concentrations detected in the Middle Atlantic region were due primarily to the unusually heavy rains occurring over the weekend and on Monday.
- . Heaviest concentrations detected were in Pennsylvania, near the Maryland line. Lesser levels were detected by monitoring stations from New England to Florida.
- . Principal focus was on the isotope Iodine 131 because of its tendency to concentrate in cows' milk. Milk heavily contaminated with Iodine 131 could be a risk to babies.
- . However, the highest concentrations in milk yet detected are in the range of 1% to 5% of the levels that would be a cause of sufficient concern to warrant any special action. "Special action" in this case means switching cows temporarily to hay rather than live green feed, and using the milk containing Iodine 131 for cheese for a few days.
- . Iodine 131 decays rapidly (half-life of 8 days); thus, the observed effect is transitory and radioactivity levels should return to normal within a few days.
- . Iodine 131 concentrations that were detected are from 5 to 20 times normal background levels for Iodine 131. Total radiation levels did not increase by that amount.
- . Intensive monitoring activities will be continued. These include:
 - Air, water, and soil sampling by ERDA, NRC licensees (nuclear power plant installations), and state agencies.
 - Milk sampling and analysis by EPA and state agencies, particularly the State of Pennsylvania.

RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT IN PENNSYLVANIA

Q: Can you confirm the statement from Pennsylvania that dangerous levels of radioactivity have been produced there from fallout of a Chinese nuclear test?

A: EPA and ERDA officials have looked at the radioactive fallout level at a number of locations and concluded that no health hazard exists. The level is no more than one percent of the level at which EPA would recommend precautionary action. As it relates to milk ingestion, the effect is much less than our current or contemplated future standards would permit.

Q: Do our nuclear tests present a fallout problem for us?

A: No, U.S. and Soviet tests are conducted underground and designed to prevent fallout. This is consistent with the mutual obligations the U.S., Soviets and many other countries have assumed under the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, which prohibits nuclear testing in the atmosphere. We have encouraged all others, including the Chinese, to observe this ban, and we regret they have not yet chosen to do so.

Q: Will we protest to the Chinese that they are creating a health hazard in the U.S.?

A: Our view is that atmospheric tests should be halted. Nevertheless, the level of fallout does not constitute a health hazard.

Q: Carter has proposed a five-year nuclear testing moratorium; wouldn't this halt the fallout problem?

A: To date the Chinese have totally opposed limitations on nuclear testing. There is no reason to believe they have changed that position.

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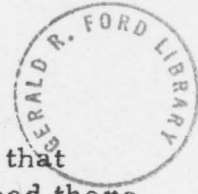
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KOREA

- Korea is a flash point for possible conflict in Asia.
- North Korea is heavily armed (500,000), dangerous and aggressive as we have just recently seen in crisis.
- Therefore, it is essential that America be firm and leave no doubt of its obligations.
- This is only way to deter a new war in Asia. We proved this in August, when we stood firm.
- Our troops (42,000) are essential to the success of this policy.
- Proposal by Carter and Democrats to reduce or pull out are dangerous, because they tempt attacks - create crisis of confidence.
- We don't want repetition of 1950.
- We have proposed a new conference with both Koreas, the United States and China. This is the way to ease tensions. No unilateral withdrawals.

REBUTTAL ON KOREA

-- On human rights in Korea, we have made known our disagreements to President Park.

-- We must remember that Korea is surrounded by hostile powers - North Korea, the Soviet Union and China. It faces subversion and half a million men on its borders.

-- We cannot withdraw our troops, cut off our military aid, or blackmail Korean government because it does not live up to our standards.

-- Korea in hostile hands is a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan. Asians will lose faith in our reliability if we fail to live up to commitments in Korea.

-- Carter's withdrawal pledges will undermine the stability on the peninsula and security throughout Asia.