

FEB 16 1966

Dear Mr. Dryden:

We received a copy of the report reviewing Federal policies and programs for areas of high risk of natural disaster damage by letter of January 3, 1966, from Mr. Ellington. As you know, our Assistant General Manager, Mr. Dwight Ink, served as the Executive Director for the Federal Reconstruction and Development Planning Commission for Alaska which made the original recommendations leading to this particular study.

We strongly support the Report's conclusion regarding the need for additional research on all natural hazards, but we particularly emphasize this need with respect to earthquake hazards. Assurance of the integrity of the structure in which they are housed is of significant importance for many types of atomic energy facilities. This has made us highly conscious of the lack of definitive information readily available on earthquake hazards which might affect such structural integrity. While much can be done to minimize potential damage through protective construction, it has been our experience that we do not have enough information, in all cases, to make an informed judgment with respect to the suitability of the structures proposed for a particular site; or, to put it another way, significant economic penalties may be resulting from establishing restrictive design criteria for protective construction to compensate for lack of information regarding the potential earthquake hazard.

I also would urge serious consideration to the possibility of establishing some continuing means, probably within the Executive Office of the President, to oversee the wide-spread activities of Federal agencies with respect to natural disasters. (The final paragraph of the report, page 33, talks in terms of a Natural Resources Planning Board; this has connotations of a breadth of coverage that may be too extensive for the problem at hand.) We have found in the history of AEC that the organizational unit or contractor charged with performing a particular task must frequently involve itself in a development activity having broad implications for other programs in order to accomplish the specific job at hand. In such cases there must be an effective means of implementing the broader implications. The same

has been true throughout government. For example, it is impossible to say that all research and development on any one particular subject should be done by a single agency. But I believe the efforts of the Office of Science and Technology have been effective not only in minimizing duplication of effort but also in making better utilization of the past and planned efforts of other agencies to meet the needs of a particular agency. By analogy, I believe the same need may exist with respect to the broad spectrum of programs described in this report (which range from how to predict a natural disaster to how to alleviate the suffering and damage which result from one and to minimize the suffering and damage of a possible recurrence) to make most effective the Federal Government's contribution.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Elmer T. Siskind

Chairman

Mr. Franklin B. Dryden
Acting Director
Executive Office of the President
Office of Emergency Planning

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First page revised in OGM by CSK

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