

MEMO TO FILES

May 9, 1958

FROM: G. W. MORGAN

SUBJECT: Attached draft to Mr. Reinke, California re waste disposal in Pacific Ocean

Postponement of acknowledging Mr. Reinke's letter of April 3 has been made until the report on the study of waste disposal in Atlantic has been reviewed.

Lieberman and Joseph estimate that review will be made and the letter can be answered more adequately within the next two weeks.

Attachment
Proposed draft to Reinke

A/36
~~28~~

This draft not sent @ see memo explaining.

Dear Mr. Reinke:

DRAFT - 5/9/58

This is to acknowledge your letter of April 3 presenting questions with regard to waste disposal in the ocean.

The Commission has not issued a license to permit bulk disposal in the Pacific Ocean. The licenses of two users of low levels of radioisotopes in marine biological research have been conditioned to permit the disposal of small quantities of their own wastes in the Atlantic Ocean. But we have not developed general criteria for bulk disposal of liquid wastes in the ocean. Our first application for bulk disposal of other than the very low levels referred to above has been received from Reed Curtiss and we have requested from them more detailed information on proposed methods, control measures, disposal procedures, etc. If the requested information suggests plausibility from the safety standpoint we will review it with you before viewing it favorably.

We do not have experimental data to indicate that the packages of wastes will not rupture before reaching a depth in excess of 1,000 fathoms. There is experience which indicates that concrete immersed in sea water will endure for very long periods. We, however, lack experimental data to permit us to estimate accurately the life of waste containers on the bottom of the ocean.

Since dispersion and dilution is the basic reason for ocean disposal/whether containers remain intact for indefinite periods or even whether they sink to depths of 1,000 fathoms before rupturing. The material should be packaged so as to prevent floating should rupture occur. We feel that the packaging of the levels and types of wastes being disposed of by licensees, the AEC and the Navy will assure that the packages will sink to adequate depths for safety and to prevent floating before rupture even if they should rupture before reaching the ocean floor.

As you perhaps know we are continuing to reexamine the problems of waste disposal in the ocean. Some of these activities are referred to in the copy of the enclosed letter which was sent to Mr. Seth Gordon.

If we can be of further assistance in clarifying our activities please feel free to call on us. yvt.

Dear Mr. Reinke:

This is to acknowledge your letter of April 3 presenting questions with regard to waste disposal in the ocean.

The Commission has not issued a license to permit bulk disposal in the Pacific Ocean. The licenses of two users of small quantities of radioisotopes in marine biological research have been conditioned to permit the disposal of small quantities of low concentration of their own wastes in the Atlantic Ocean. But we have not developed general criteria for bulk disposal of liquid wastes in the ocean.

At present we have an application from Reed-Curtiss for bulk disposal and have requested more detailed information on proposed methods, control measures, disposal procedures, etc. ^{the requested information compares to that submitted} If after receiving this information we feel that the ^{plausibility for the proposed disposal} ~~proposal deserves favorable consideration~~ we will review with you this information ^{if} ~~along with our analysis before taking any action.~~ ^{considering it seriously.}

We do not have experimental data to indicate that the packages of wastes will not rupture before reaching a depth in excess of 1,000 fathoms. There is experience which indicates that concrete immersed in sea water will endure for very long periods. We, however, lack experimental data to permit us to estimate accurately the life of waste containers on the bottom of the ocean. Significant lateral drift of containers while sinking would not be anticipated in areas approved for disposal and appreciable movement of containers on the ocean floor in these areas would not be expected.

We are not particularly concerned, however, as to whether containers remain intact for indefinite periods or even whether they sink to depths of 1,000 fathoms before rupturing. We feel that the packaging of the levels and types of wastes being disposed of by licensees, the AEC and the Navy will assure that the packages will sink to adequate depths for safety by dispersal before rupture even if they should rupture before reaching the ocean floor.

Mr. Reiske

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DRAFT - 5/8/58

As you perhaps know we are continuing to reexamine the problems of waste disposal in the ocean. Some of these activities are referred to in the copy of the enclosed letter which was sent to Mr. Seth Gordon.

If we can be of further assistance in clarifying our activities please feel free to call on us.

Yours very truly,