



that it includes representatives of HEW, Agriculture, Defense, Treasury, and Interior; that it meets on a quarterly basis and that its primary area of operation in recent years has been that of insecticides. Therefore, it would seem that all that would be needed to soup up the activities of this group and to give it greater visibility would be the addition of a White House representative.

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Assistant to the Secretary



October 26, 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HON. DON PAARLBERG

I enclose a memorandum from Commissioner Larrick amplifying on several of the points in your draft memorandum. Also enclosed is a statement by the Public Health Service on "pesticide residues and the food supply" which I understand you requested on September 24th and which got lost in the shuffle in the intervening weeks.

The PHS statement, you will note, emphasizes two principal points: (1) the significance of total exposure; and (2), the PHS work in toxicologic and clinical studies encompassing human as well as animal data. It was the substance of PHS comments on your draft that these two points should be taken into consideration.

PHS also felt that your memorandum appeared to place undue emphasis on the short-term public relations aspects of the food exposure problem as contrasted to the long-range health effects resulting from all sources of exposure. (The latter, for example, would include strengthening of the toxicologic work at the PHS Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Georgia, surveillance and protection of public water supplies with relation to pesticide contaminants due to agricultural run-off, and development of methodology for use by State and local milk control agencies in protecting against a wide spectrum of commercial pesticides.

In connection with the two recommendations made in your memorandum, PHS fully agrees that budget increases for their activities in this area would be in order. As to the matter of establishing an interdepartmental committee on the pesticide problem, however, PHS pointed out that there is already in existence an Interdepartmental Committee on Pest Control. I understand that this group has been in existence since 1946.