

From: [REDACTED], C.B.E., R.N.

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UNCLASSIFIED

Office of
The Captain Grapple Squadron,
British Forces Post Office 170.

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19th August 1958.

Thank you for your letter of 11th August. [REDACTED] has arrived safely and has started work. I do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting your requirements as far as whom he works with, etc. are concerned, and for the moment as he seems to be getting on so well I am letting things run without interfering.

I shall of course speak to [REDACTED] about the requirements you have given me and ask him to let me know if he feels he is not getting all the value which he should.

Blood Tests

I am afraid that I am getting very confused in this matter. Before reading C.A.F.C. 81/58 I had understood from [REDACTED] who is out here now, that it had been agreed on a tri-Service basis that no more blood testing would be carried out, except that a unit would be provided at Christmas Island to test certain personnel who work in the advanced area of the Island.

The original requirement for Naval personnel to be blood tested out here was raised by me after attending a meeting at Aldermaston, when A.W.R.E. stated that, in their opinion, it was necessary for everyone permanently attached to the Task Force to be tested. Because I felt that, if this were true, it was essential to deal quickly with the many Naval ratings who were about to be drafted to Christmas Island, I took immediate action with C.N.D. and at the same time started a Yellow Jacket within the Admiralty.

Subsequently, however, it became clear that there was a difference of opinion as between A.W.R.E. and the Service as to whether this testing was really justified. To resolve this difference of opinion a meeting was held at A.W.R.E., which was attended by [REDACTED] representing Air Ministry and you representing the Admiralty. It was at this meeting that I understood a decision had been taken not to carry out blood tests in U.K. on any more Grapple personnel.

I do not consider that the decision on whether blood testing should or should not be done is one for this Task Force to take. If it were, then it could only be based on A.W.R.E. medical advice rather than Service medical advice, in view of the status of the Medical Officers who are permanently attached to our Headquarters. The decision for or against is likely to be based largely on political rather than medical reasoning and any questions in the "House" which might arise will have to be answered by the Service Ministry involved. It therefore would seem that a decision should be based on a joint Service medical view and this is what I thought had been agreed before I left London.

In the meantime I have written to [REDACTED] in T.P.S. asking him to have the C.A.F.C. amended to make it clear that units temporarily attached, such as the weather ships, are not required in any case to be tested.

/Surgeon Lieutenant

[REDACTED]
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Return to U.K.

You will be glad to hear that the medical set-up here has vastly improved since you were here in April. This is largely due to the very co-operative attitude of [REDACTED], the senior R.A.F. Medical Officer. The relations between the two Naval doctors in RESOLUTION and HARVIK and the up-country hospital could hardly be improved upon. Milner is doing very well; I would like very much to let him take about 10 days leave in October. At this time HARVIK will also be away and it would seem a pity to drop suddenly to no Medical Officers at all. Would M.D.G. have any objection to Surgeon [REDACTED] standing in for [REDACTED] for 10 days while he is away? It would mean he got back to U.K. some 10 days later. I think it would be good value for [REDACTED] in the long term and he told me he would have no objection, provided it was O.K. by M.D.G. No appointing action is of course necessary and the "stand in" would be entirely a local arrangement. I would be most grateful if you could let me know whether this is acceptable to M.D.G.

[REDACTED]