

March 23, 1971

Honorable Melvin R. Laird
Executive Agent
National Communications System
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Washington, D. C. 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary:

By my letter of March 5 to Mr. deRosa I forwarded a copy of the revised "Statement of White House Requirements for Presidential Communications with the General Public During Periods of National Emergency," and advised him of my intention to initiate a review of the entire Emergency Broadcast System (EBS).

A group of technically qualified personnel is required as a nucleus to conduct this review. The people assigned to this group, augmented as required from other agencies and industry, will work within the attached terms of reference to recommend measures to improve the operation of the existing EBS, and to provide options for improvement which can be made in the next one to three years.

I would appreciate your requesting the Manager, National Communications System, to provide two persons as participants in this nucleus group.

I am certain that you share my concern with past failures of the EBS, and I am sure that with the cooperation of all

interested parties steps can be taken to insure a more responsive system in the very near future.

Sincerely,

/signed/

Clay T. Whitehead

Attachment

cc: General George A. Lincoln, OEP
Commissioner Robert G. Wells, FCC
Governor John E. Davis, OCD
Dr. Robert M. White, NOAA
Lt. General Richard P. Klocko, DCA
Mr. Louis A. deRosa, DoD
✓Mr. Whitehead (2)

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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR REVIEW OF THE
EMERGENCY BROADCAST SYSTEM

A group of technically qualified personnel will be formed to conduct a review of the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS). This group will be headed by a member of the staff of OTP, and will be made up of two members provided by NCS and one person provided by the FCC. The group will be augmented as required by persons from the communications industry and other Federal agencies.

The EBS Review Group will accomplish the following:

a. Determine what caused the inadvertent activation of the EBS on February 20, not as a "finger-pointing" exercise but to insure that the group has complete knowledge of the incident. The Department of Defense investigation and the FCC investigation will be made available to assist in this effort.

b. Recommend measures required to correct any deficiencies in the existing EBS. Include incorporation of new and revised requirements as stated in the "Statement of White House Requirements for Presidential Communications with the General Public During Periods of National Emergency" dated February 26, 1971, and the additional requirements forwarded to OTP by General Hughes in his memorandum for Clay T. Whitehead, dated March 4, 1971.

c. When the recommendations to correct deficiencies are approved, rewrite the EBS plan to reflect required changes.

d. Provide options for near-term improvement of the EBS in order to increase its reliability, responsiveness, coverage, etc.