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**Item ID Number** 01968

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**Report/Article Title** Letter to J. S. Coombs from Alvin L. Young. January 25, 1984

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**Year** 0000

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**Description Notes** Young responds to Coombs's letter of January 13, 1984 (also included in item), discussing Young's support of the Australian Servicemen's Health Study protocol and his concern about the commitment of resources. See item 1969 for continuation of this line of correspondence.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

January 25, 1984

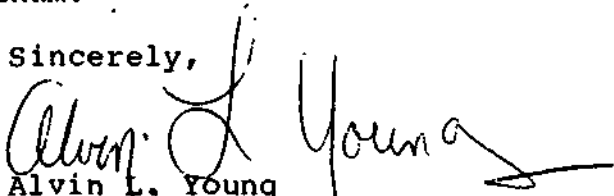
Dear Mr. Coombs:

I have reviewed your letter of January 13, 1984 requesting my signature on the attached document as affirmation that the Australian Servicemen's Health Study is "epidemiologically sound and feasible and that its performance is scientifically desirable."

I fully appreciate your concern that the protocol is now finalized and that it is imperative for the study, if approved, be initiated immediately. My concern is not whether the protocol is epidemiologically sound (in my opinion it certainly is) nor whether its performance is scientifically desirable (in my opinion both of our nations will gain valuable information from this scientific study), rather my concern is with the word "feasible." The study is feasible only if the resources are committed. The commitment of resources to such a study is not one that should be made lightly. It will involve governmental priorities and political concerns. As an "outsider" I must not contribute to those deliberations.

I endorse the scientific validity of the protocol and recognize the importance of conducting, in a timely manner, health studies of veterans who served in Vietnam.

Sincerely,

  
Alvin L. Young  
Senior Policy Analyst for  
Life Sciences

Mr. J. S. Coombs O.C.  
G.P.O. Box 4842  
Sydney, N.S.W. 2001  
Australia



ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE USE AND  
EFFECTS OF CHEMICAL AGENTS ON AUSTRALIAN PERSONNEL  
IN VIETNAM

Commissioner: The Hon. Mr Justice Phillip Evatt DSC

Secretary: Mr B.D. Meade

G.P.O. Box 4842  
Sydney, N.S.W. 2001  
Telephone: (02) 239 6222

13 January, 1984

Dr. Alvin L. Young, Lt. Col., U.S.A.F., PhD,  
Senior Policy Analyst for Life Sciences,  
Executive Office of the President,  
Office for Science and Technology Policy,  
WASHINGTON DC 20500 USA

Dear Al,

Notwithstanding the participation of all members of the Scientific Advisory Panel in the finalisation of the protocol our masters require the attached confirmation of the agreement reached which I included in a letter to the appropriate Minister. Accordingly I would be obliged if you would return the attached document as a matter of extreme urgency.

Kind regards,

J. S. Coombs Q.C.

Attachment.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Phillip Evatt DSC LLB,  
Royal Commissioner,  
Royal Commission on the Use and Effects of  
Chemical Agents on Australian Personnel  
In Vietnam,  
G.P.O. Box 4842,  
SYDNEY. N.S.W. 2001

Dear Judge,

We the undersigned, members of your Scientific Advisory Panel, hereby confirm that we took part in a review and critique of a protocol for Australian Servicemens Health Study leading to its consolidation into the protocol dated 22 December, 1983.

We confirm our agreement that the study is epidemiologically sound and feasible and that its performance is scientifically desirable.

Yours sincerely,

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Dr. Bruce Armstrong

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Dr. Tony McMichael MB, BS

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Dr. John Mathews B. Sc, MB, MD, MRACP,  
PhD, FRACP

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Dr. D. Riedel, M.Sc, PhD

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Dr. Alvin Young