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TO : General Goodpaster

DATE: August 20, 1959

FROM : Dr. Kistiakowsky



SUBJECT: Project CANES

Since our last discussion of this matter, I had a briefing and two conversations with knowledgeable people. My present conclusion is that the project is of no overwhelming value, but may provide useful information, and since Project SAMOS will probably be delayed, this information will come at an opportune time. The project could not be embarrassing under the worst possible circumstances, i.e. some electronic breakdown, until the President issues a specific authorization, which could be postponed until the spring of 1960. When such authorization is given, the degree of conceivable embarrassment would be very slight, about commensurate to the value of information obtained, and is not likely to happen in any case.

The cost of the project apparently will be well below half a million, if the approval is given now, so that no air transportation of components is involved, etc. I understand these funds are available, but of course I can't be sure that it will not sprout new offshoots.

My present position is a recommendation to approve, but not a strong one. I do not think that failure to grant approval will hurt our interests seriously.

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