

# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, Administrative Staff, OC

DATE: 1 December 1953

FROM : Chief, Engineering Division, OC

SUBJECT: Housing Situation [REDACTED]

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Reference: Memo to Chief, Research & Development Branch, OC-E, from Chief, Research & Development Laboratory, OC-E, dated 20 November 1953 (attached)

1. Attached is the result of a thorough and exhaustive investigation of housing facilities in the [REDACTED] area by members of the Research & Development Laboratory group who are planning to move to the [REDACTED] area. In general, the laboratory personnel have approached the subject of physically moving to the [REDACTED] area with an open mind and have, in fact, become rather enthusiastic over the improved working conditions and facilities which will be available to them in the new laboratory building. However, it must be pointed out that a considerable "damper" has now been put upon their spirits as a result of their checking into the housing facilities available [REDACTED]

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2. Discussions with [REDACTED], Chief, Real Estate and Construction Division, Logistics Office, on 25 November 1953, in general confirm the facts outlined in the R&D report; that is, such housing as is available is more costly and less desirable than housing which is available in the Washington area. [REDACTED] indicated that he would be quite willing to assist the Office of Communications in any manner possible should the Assistant Director for Communications determine that the situation warrants Agency action leading to PRC approval of a housing project of some nature [REDACTED]. The Real Estate & Construction Division has engaged in similar activities for other Agency components and can offer us service in this connection if required. Probably twelve months' time would elapse before results could be obtained through any such program.

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3. An assignment of an individual PCS [REDACTED] cannot fairly be compared to an assignment overseas since the overseas assignments generally include either free housing or housing allowances. The facts appear to show that a PCS assignment [REDACTED] definitely places an individual at a disadvantage financially as compared to a Washington assignment. In other words, cheaper living facilities are not available at [REDACTED] despite the general impression that this might be the case.

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4. There is no question that the housing situation [REDACTED] is now causing a number of the Laboratory members to reconsider their previous decision to go along with the move. Taking the worst view, should we lose a number of the present Laboratory personnel as a result of the unfavorable [REDACTED] housing

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situation, the recruitment of qualified new Laboratory personnel might well be very difficult for the same reason in view of the present industry competition for electronic engineers and technicians. It would appear that an arrangement as suggested in the referenced report, Paragraph 6, might be in order for all Communications personnel assigned to permanent duty at [REDACTED]

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5. We have heard that the TSS Laboratory recently established in the [REDACTED] vicinity is being staffed by personnel on a TDY status from Washington. It is understood that these individuals are drawing per diem and, in addition, are being allowed to work a seven-hour day to compensate for the commuting time involved. Although there is no confirmation of these facts, it may be that a precedent for initial per diem and/or travel allowances may have been established in other elements of the Agency and that some equitable arrangement may be worked out to compensate for the financial losses accruing to Laboratory personnel making the [REDACTED] move (particularly those in the GS-6, GS-7, and GS-9 categories) who at present are living in quite acceptable apartment quarters in the Washington area at costs considerably below the cost of less desirable quarters in the [REDACTED] area.

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6. Prompt exploration of all means of compensating for the unfavorable [REDACTED] situation is urged in view of the nearing Laboratory moving date - 15 January 1954.

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[REDACTED]  
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Attachment:  
Reference