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PALOMARES SUMMARY REPORT

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28-1416

PALOMARES SUMMARY REPORT

15 JANUARY 1975

**FIELD COMMAND PROJECT OFFICERS
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DEDICATION



WRIGHT HASKELL LANGHAM, PhD.

1911- 1972

"Knowledgeable, eloquent and effective" -- a few of the many descriptive phrases that have been applied to Wright Langham, "Mr. Plutonium." We of the Department of Defense remember Dr. Langham of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory as a friend and ready advisor. It is particularly fitting that this summary of the Palomares accident, one of many specific instances of Dr. Langham's valuable assistance to the DOD, be dedicated to his memory. We do so in fond appreciation.

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FOREWORD

The accident which occurred over Palomares, Spain on 17 January 1966 and its subsequent recovery operation attracted worldwide interest. This report is designed as a summary which collects the most pertinent data under one cover.

The authors, in assembling the records and recollections of the period, are certainly aware of the problems of assigning relative worth to historical records. The many decisions which had to be made in preparing this summary were based on the answers to two questions. First, "Did the occurrence impact on the Palomares operation or political situation?", and second, "Might a record of the occurrence aid in the prosecution of a similar operation at some time in the future?" If the answers were affirmative, we have attempted to include the information in this summary.

We are indebted to many individuals and organizations for access to their files and memories. Nine years have passed since the operation, so files and memories were sometimes dusty and sometimes destroyed. To each request for information, however, a positive and sincere attempt was made to satisfy our requirement. For this effort, we express our appreciation.

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