

M.R. A 7-11-58

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REPOSITORY NARA College Park  
COLLECTION RG 326 51-58 Secretary  
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FOLDER MRA 7 Hardtack, V2



1337th AEC1. AEC 952/31 - U.S. Observer Program for HARDTACK (See minutes of Meeting 1313)  
Meeting 2-26-58

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General Starbird reviewed with the Commissioners arrangements which could be made for conducting a test shot during operation HARDTACK to demonstrate to foreign observers the U.S. capability of producing nuclear weapons with greatly reduced fallout. General Starbird said the method discussed in AEC 952/31

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Carl Wilson 3/23/84  
REVIEWED BY DATE

H.R. Schmidt 7/15/85

By: W. Trench 3/18/86



[REDACTED]

would afford observers an opportunity to test a cloud sample of a clean weapons test and demonstrate that there was actually greatly reduced fallout from the weapon and would not reveal important new weapons information. Under this plan, samples would be brought to the UCRL laboratory at Berkeley, where they would be analyzed in the presence of the foreign observers. General Starbird added, however, that any observers who attended a clean weapons test and who are predisposed not to believe any analysis which shows a weapon to be clean would not be convinced otherwise by the demonstration. On the other hand, those who believe that the U.S. has developed a clean weapon do not need a demonstration shot to prove it to them.

Mr. Libby pointed out that countries such as India are capable of conducting their own analysis of the cloud samples and inquired why, after observing the test detonation, they should not be provided samples to analyze in their own laboratories. General Starbird replied that certain additional weapons information could be deduced that would not be discovered if the tests were conducted under U.S. supervision at the UCRL laboratory. Mr. Fields added that each country probably would arrive at a different conclusion about the cleanliness of the weapon tested and the result would be general confusion about what the test actually proved. Mr. Libby said he did not favor holding the test since he believed the effort and money expended on it could much more profitably be spent on other projects but, if a demonstration is to be held, the foreign observers should be permitted to take the samples to their own laboratories for analysis. To prohibit this, he said, would only bring about accusations that the U.S. was attempting to censor the results of the test.

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Mr. Vance proposed that the President be advised that a method had been devised for demonstrating to foreign observers that the U.S. has developed a clean weapon and that it can be demonstrated without revealing important new weapons information. However, even this demonstration would not convince those who want to believe that the U.S. has no such weapon, and therefore the Commission recommends that no demonstration shot be included in the HARDTACK series.

Mr. Floberg said he believed that neutral countries such as India, Sweden, and Switzerland might be persuaded by such a demonstration and that it is these countries, and not Communist countries, that the U.S. would wish to influence. He said that if proof of the U.S. clean weapons capability is not publicly demonstrated by holding this test, there is a danger that the U.S. may be forced into a disarmament agreement banning all weapons testing. Mr. Libby said he doubted this possibility.

Mr. Floberg said he thought the Commission is obligated to provide the President guidance on whether the test should be held, and if it is not, how he should reply to press and diplomatic questions about his previous statement that observers would be invited to witness clean weapons test. Mr. Graham said that in view of the President's statement that observers would be invited, the Commission would, in effect, be giving the President a vote of no confidence if it advised him that a demonstration test should not be held. If the test is not conducted, he said, many persons would infer that the U.S. actually does not have a clean weapons capability and that the U.S. stockpile is made up only of normal or "dirty" weapons. If the observer shot is held, he said he agreed with Mr. Libby that the countries should be permitted to analyze the samples in their own laboratories. Mr. Floberg suggested that all observer countries

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be offered the facilities of the UCRL laboratory to conduct their analyses, but that those countries wishing to make the analysis in their own laboratories be permitted to do so.

In response to a question by Mr. Libby, Captain Morse said the question of a demonstration shot had not been formally discussed by the Operations Coordinating Board but that at the OCB staff level, it was considered a grave mistake to cancel the shot. Captain Morse said in his opinion the test would emphasize U.S. interest in and capability of developing clean weapons and that a clean weapons stockpile is possible.

Mr. Vance said the President might justify a retraction of his statement that observers would be invited to witness and sample a clean weapons test by saying that the AEC, after careful study, has found no way that observers could prove to their complete satisfaction and without U.S. assistance that the weapon tested was actually clean. Therefore, since the observer countries must accept on good faith certain basic facts about the demonstration, the countries might as well go one step further and accept on good faith the fact that the U.S. does have clean weapons. Mr. Floberg said he did not consider this a very strong argument to submit to the President.

Mr. Graham said, if the issue came to a vote, he would favor conducting the U.S. observer test shot. Mr. McGruder reported that Mr. Strauss is also in favor of proceeding with the test. Mr. Libby said he could not wholeheartedly support such a test. After further discussion, the Commissioners decided to defer a decision on the matter until a later meeting.

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