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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

408454

MEETING NO. 1120

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9:30 a.m., Thursday, August 25, 1955

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REPOSITORY NARA - College Park  
COLLECTION RG 346  
BOX No. 8  
FOLDER Vol. 16 (1952)  
REC Meeting Minutes  
Dubois 1095-1120

Present

Lewis L. Strauss  
Thomas E. Murray  
W. F. Libby

K. E. Fields  
Edward Diamond

W. B. McCool  
William L. Oakley

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED  
~~OR~~ CHANGED TO Confidential/RO  
BY AUTHORITY OF Classification  
BY Wm. Lynch DATE 2-25-60

Also Present

A. Tammaro  
J. L. Kelehan  
David F. Shaw  
Col. Alfred D. Starbird  
Comdr. Harry Hahn  
George J. Keto  
Comdr. Philip F. Bankhardt  
Louis H. Roddis  
Edward N. Bowen  
George Phillips  
Morse Salisbury  
Charles L. Marshall  
Murray Nash  
Robert E. Hollingsworth

Howard Brown  
T. R. Jones  
Paul F. Foster  
William Berman  
J. F. Hennessey  
William Gorvine  
Everett Holles  
Manuel Dupkin  
John Mackenzie, Jr.  
Comdr. Charles E. Nelson  
Comdr. John W. Crawford  
Richard J. Hallinan  
Paul C. Fine  
Richard V. Willet

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
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BY: [Signature]  
AUTHORITY: 10 CFR 835.401  
NAME: [Signature]

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at beginning of  
month # 1120  
8/25/55*

recommended program would be six percent of the fiscal effort at LASL at the end of FY 1957, and that the total fiscal effort in fields other than weapons would be fifteen percent. Comparable figures for Livermore were nine percent and twenty-five percent respectively. He added that it was also recommended that after 1956 this work be directed by the Division of Reactor Development. In answer to a question by Mr. Libby, Mr. Fields observed that this administrative arrangement was a common one in AEC. Mr. Murray suggested that before the Commission takes action, the program should be discussed with the DOD.

Mr. Fields said that for budget planning purposes he would like to be able to assume that the program would be approved. The Commissioners indicated they had no objection to the General Manager's proceeding with budget planning on this basis. However, they requested that before further Commission consideration, the subject be scheduled for discussion with the MLC and the GAC.

Mr. Murray suggested that Colonel Starbird identify for the MLC the key technical people who would be involved in the project. Colonel Starbird said that he would do so, and added that Dr. Bradbury did not believe this program would interfere with the weapons program but believed that it might actually assist the weapons program by enabling him to keep certain people who might otherwise leave the laboratory.

In answer to a question by Mr. Murray, Mr. Roddis briefly reviewed the LASL Reactor effort.

During the above discussion Mr. Strauss briefly left the meeting.

5. AEC 762/6 - Weapons Effects Handbook (See AEC 762/2)

Mr. Fields and Colonel Starbird commented on the recommendation that the Commission declassify for use in the Weapons Effects Handbook, information concerning the effects of atomic weapons with yields up to 20 megatons. They also reviewed the proposed reply to the Director of ODM's request concerning an appropriate yield to use for dispersal planning.

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*Per authorization  
at beginning of  
minute # 1120  
8/25/55*

Colonel Starbird said the President had been informed of the proposed limit of 20 megatons for the yields spectrum in the Weapons Effects Handbook. Mr. Strauss added that the President had also approved it.

After further discussion, the Commission:

- a. Determined that the effects information as noted in AEC 762/2 for yields up to 20 MT, together with a full presentation of scaling laws for calculation of effects beyond this limit of yield, may be published without undue risk to the common defense and security;
- b. Approved the declassification of the effects information referred to in a above;
- c. Noted that the MLC has approved the declassification of these items;
- d. Noted that the Director, Office of Defense Mobilization, will be advised by letter such as Appendix "B" to AEC 762/6, as revised in accordance with the discussion at the meeting;
- e. Noted that declassification of scaling laws for yields beyond 20 MT in effect declassifies effects information derived therefrom;
- f. Noted that this information will be used in preparation of the revised handbook "The Effects of Atomic Weapons", and that a statement will be included in the handbook making it clear that 20 MT is not indicative of existing requirements, future capabilities or probable developments;
- g. Noted that, prior to publication, pertinent portions of the revised handbook will be coordinated with FCDA;

*per authorization  
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minute # 1120  
8/25/55*

h. Noted that there will be no unclassified distribution of the revised handbook or its manuscripts prior to final classification review by the Atomic Energy Commission;

i. Noted that letters such as Appendix "C" and "D" to AEC 762/6, as revised in accordance with the discussion at the meeting, will be dispatched to MLC and JCAE; and

j. Noted that FCDA's letter of June 30, 1955, will be the subject of a separate Commission paper (AEC 482/18).

6. AEC 467/12 - Succession of Command in Event of Disaster

Mr. Fields pointed out that this paper recommended that authority be delegated to him to revise the succession of command in order to correct it when incumbents of designated positions change.

After discussion, the Commission:

Approved the recommendation of AEC 467/12.

7. AEC 482/18 - Declassification of Information Regarding Residual Radiation

Mr. Fields said that the Administrator, FCDA, had requested declassification of information concerning residual radiation from atomic explosions yielding up to 5 megatons so that this information could be provided State Civil Defense groups. This information would be included in the revised Weapons Effects Handbook, however, there was a need for it at this time.

After further discussion, the Commission:

a. Approved the declassification of the information that appears in Annex "A" to Appendix "C" to

*per authorization  
at beginning of  
minute # 1120  
8/25/55*

AEC 482/18 concerning the contamination of areas in the vicinity of ground zero, for yields up to 5 megatons;

b. Determined that such information may be published without undue risk to the common defense and security;

c. Noted that graphic and tabular data attached as Annex "A" to Appendix "C" (now in FCDA's hands as received from DOD in classified form) will be declassified and dispatched to the Administrator, FCDA, to implement paragraph a above;

d. Noted that use of the information declassified in paragraph a above, in conjunction with unclassified scaling laws, will make it possible to calculate similar information for weapons of higher yields;

e. Noted that a future proposed revision of the Joint AEC-DOD Classification Guide will contain a topic reflecting this declassification action;

f. Noted that the Administrator, FCDA, will be informed on this action by letter such as that in Appendix "D" to AEC 482/18; and

g. Noted that the MLC, JCAE and the GAC will be advised of this action by appropriate letter.

Mr. Strauss suggested that the OCB be informed of this action.

8. AEC 637/4 - Policy on Service Irradiation of Gems

Mr. Fields pointed out that this recommendation would reverse the interim policy the Commission had established on April 19, 1953, prohibiting the irradiation of gems in the Commission facilities. After discussion the paper was deferred until the first meeting in September.

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8/25/55*

12. AEC 781/9 - Request for Release of Information to the U. K.

Mr. Fields and Colonel Starbird reviewed the recommendation that the Commission determine that certain information which the DOD proposes to transmit to the U. K. is not important information related to design of the nuclear components of an atomic weapon. Mr. Fields added that an AEC working group had carefully reviewed the documents and the information which they did not believe could be legally transmitted had been recommended for deletion.

Mr. Murray said that he would like to obtain additional scientific advice on whether thermonuclear weapon information might not be more revealing of important design information on these weapons than comparable information on fission weapons. Mr. Strauss suggested that the Commission approve the transmittal of the information which the AEC group had recommended concerning fission weapons and withhold its judgment on any thermonuclear weapons information. Mr. Fine said that the transmittal of the thermonuclear weapons information was a policy question rather than a legal one and that the group had made the judgment required under the Act, which does not distinguish between fission and thermonuclear weapons information.

Mr. Strauss observed that the recent Presidential decision on custody of thermonuclear weapons would partially solve the problem of transmitting information on these weapons to the U. K. (See minutes of the Executive Session of Meeting 1118.) He suggested that Colonel Starbird discuss with General Loper the problems which the DOD would encounter if the Commission judgment on the thermonuclear weapons information is deferred.

After further discussion, the Commission:

a. Deferred a decision on whether the thermonuclear weapons information contained in the five Air Force Special Weapons Center technical memoranda - reports, which the DOD proposes to transmit to the U. K., will reveal important information concerning the design or fabrication of the nuclear components of an atomic weapon;

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at beginning of  
minute #1120  
8/25/55*

b. Requested scientific judgments from the GAC and the Directors of LASL and Livermore as to whether external characteristics of thermonuclear weapons will reveal important information concerning the design and fabrication of the nuclear components of an atomic weapon;

c. Determined that the specific items of Restricted Data listed in Paragraph 7b of Appendix "A" to AEC 781/9 will reveal important information concerning the design or fabrication of the nuclear components of an atomic weapon;

d. Determined that, except as limited by a, the specific items of Restricted Data listed in Paragraph 7c of Appendix "A" to AEC 781/9 will not reveal important information concerning the design or fabrication of the nuclear components of an atomic weapon;

e. Noted the opinion of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Atomic Energy) that national policy provides for furnishing information to the British to insure compatibility of their aircraft with U. S. weapons;

f. Noted that the specific items of Restricted Data listed in Paragraph 7a of Appendix "A" to AEC 781/9 are outside the scope of the exceptions contained in Section 144(b) of the Atomic Energy Act;

g. Noted that the Department of Defense has determined that all the items of Restricted Data listed in Paragraphs 7a, 7b and 7c of Appendix "A" to AEC 781/9 will not reveal important information concerning the design or fabrication of the nuclear components of an atomic weapon;

h. Noted that the Chairman, Military Liaison Committee, will be informed of this action by the Director of Military Application, and that the MLC

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*Per working system  
at beginning of  
minute # 1120  
8/25/55*

will be provided a detailed list of the deletions required in order to remove from the reports data that reveal important information concerning the design and fabrication of the nuclear components of an atomic weapon, and data that solely concerns thermonuclear weapons; and

i. Noted that the Joint Committee will be informed of the Commission's decision by appropriate letter after coordination with the Department of Defense.

13. Discussion with Representatives at the Geneva Technical Conference on the International Atomic Energy Agency

Mr. Strauss said that he had just spoken to Dr. Rabi and Mr. Hall and that they had not yet received the telegram which had been discussed at Meeting 1119.

At this point all members of the staff except Messrs. Diamond, McCool and Oakley left the meeting.

14. Executive Session\*

- a. Contract with McKinsey and Company
- b. Personnel Matters
- c. Custody of Thermonuclear Weapons
- d. International Scientific Conference Personnel
- e. Replacement of Director, ORNL
- f. MURA Conference

W. B. McCool  
Secretary

Approved by the Commission: November 2, 1955

\*Separate minutes for this part of the meeting have been circulated.