

WAR AND NAVY DEPARTMENTS
ARMED FORCES SPECIAL WEAPONS PROJECT
P. O. BOX 2610
WASHINGTON, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO:

20 June 1947

~~SECRET~~
MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION:

Via: Military Liaison Committee

Subject: Atomic Energy Commission Support for Scientific Resurvey of Bikini Atoll.

1. At the joint meeting of AEC and MLC on 18 June, 1947 the question of technical support by the Atomic Energy Commission of the Scientific Resurvey of Bikini Atoll was discussed. The question left unresolved related to the necessity for radio chemical measurements to be performed on samples in the field. In previous discussion it had been pointed out that radio chemical laboratories in the United States, for example, Berkeley, Los Alamos, and Oak Ridge, would naturally be equipped to perform much more thorough analyses of samples shipped back from Bikini. Thus it was reasoned that the principal scientific need at Bikini would be in connection with selection of significant samples.

2. It was agreed in the joint meeting of 18 June that further discussion with scientific groups involved in the Bikini resurvey would be conducted to determine the justification for radio chemical analyses in the field. These discussions have been held. The compelling reason for being able to perform radio chemical analyses at Bikini is that without such analyses there will be essentially random sampling, whereas with radio chemistry available the sampling will be direct and collection of significant samples will be practically assured.

3. In view of the above, it is requested that the Atomic Energy Commission include in its support of the Scientific Resurvey of Bikini Atoll support of the radio chemical analysis to be performed at Bikini to the extent of making available up to six qualified technical personnel for this purpose.

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BY

W. S. Parsons
W. S. PARSONS
Deputy Chief
Armed Forces Special Weapons Project

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MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE
TO THE
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
P. O. BOX 1814, WASHINGTON, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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FIRST ENDORSEMENT on
AFSWP ltr 20 June 1947
to AEC

20 June 1947

From: Acting Chairman, Military Liaison Committee
To: Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission

JAM
6/20

1. Forwarded, concurring in the discussion and request of the basic letter.

T. A. Solberg
T. A. SOLBERG
Rear Admiral, U.S.N.

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23 June 1967

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Lillenthal
Dr. Becker
Mr. Felt
Mr. Strauss
Mr. Tamm
Thru: Mr. DeLoach

Subject: Bikini Scientific Re-survey under Navy auspices

The following additional information was developed today. Dr. Stafford L. Warren informed me of the following conversations with Commander Revelle and Lt. Commander Guilfillen.

a. Drs. Overstreet and Jacobson will not be forced to accept assignments on the Bikini mission against their best judgment and desires in the matter. My recommendation in the earlier memorandum dated 10 June covering these two men appears to be a fair compromise.

b. Dr. Warren telephoned Dr. Karl L. Morgan, of Monsanto Clinton Laboratory at Oak Ridge in the presence of Lt. Commander Guilfillen and ascertained that Dr. Morgan could release three men from the laboratory for the Bikini mission. The men are Dr. Forest Heston, PhD in Physics, Dr. John Robertson, PhD in Physics, and Ralph Firminshaw, M.S. in Chemistry (an instrument man). All three men are in the section headed by Dr. Morgan at the Clinton Laboratories. Dr. Morgan indicated that they may be able to borrow enough measuring equipment and accessories to take with them to Bikini to do the job desired by the Navy. However, exact information on the latter point won't be known until they board the ship.

c. Dr. Warren also indicated that Dr. Richard Foster, a fish biologist at Hanford concerned with the fish program at that location and on the contractor's payroll (GE), could and should be added to the University of Washington group (Dr. Donaldson).

d. Dr. Donaldson's group consisting of about ten people from the University of Washington would go to study plant life and fish biology.

Dr. Warren indicated that Revelle and Guilfillen would use the three men from Clinton Laboratories to perform plutonium and fission products chemistry by partitioning the samples with chemical separations, take measurements with the counter equipment, and establish the ratio between the product and fission products while at Bikini. It was expected to do all these things on board the ship in the laboratory space provided.

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In the event the Commission decides to agree to the above program, it will be necessary for the writer to contact Dr. Morgan at Oak Ridge for the release of the Gove man at that location (this will be through Walter Williams), contact the plant superintendent through Colonel Clarke at Hanford for the release of Dr. Foster, and also authorize Colonel Clarke to arrange for the participation of the University of Washington group. Both Drs. Overstreet and Jackson will need to be contacted through Mr. Underhill and our representative at the University at Berkeley.

No recommendations are made.

J. A. Berry
Assistant to the General Manager

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