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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE  
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DEC 19 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR The Chairman, U. S. Atomic Energy Commission

SUBJECT: High Altitude Test for Operation HARDTACK

Reference: Letter to the Chairman, Military Liaison Committee, from the General Manager, Atomic Energy Commission, dated 26 November 1956, re the above subject.

1. The above reference contained the proposal that high altitude testing be undertaken jointly by the Department of Defense and the Atomic Energy Commission.

2. The Department of Defense concurs that a requirement exists to conduct testing at very high altitudes during Operation HARDTACK. A shot at about 250,000 feet in the range of 1 - 4 MT will meet most of the present Department of Defense requirements. In addition, the Department has under consideration a stated requirement for a shot of at least 40 KT at about 100,000 feet in order to test remote detectability.

3. As mentioned in the referenced letter, The Department of Defense would be responsible for the effects measurements made from ground and manned aircraft instrumentation. It is believed that present DOD requirements can be met by very little additional instrumentation, such as in the after body of the weapon-carrying missile. The DOD does not believe that a rocket-borne instrument array as extensive as that outlined in the Sandia Corporation study is warranted at this time, both from the standpoint of feasibility and the expense involved. Considering the present status of instrument development and the time remaining before Operation HARDTACK, it is believed that only minimum measurements of essential effects data can be supported. As stated in the above reference The Atomic Energy Commission should plan on diagnostic measurements, to include the determination of yield. Further study is required to establish the placement of the instruments and the extent to which the diagnostic measurements will meet the DOD requirements for effects data, in order that instrument development will not be duplicated. The DOD is not prepared to finance additional missiles for diagnostic measurements.

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4. The Department of Defense, therefore, concurs in the desirability of conducting high altitude testing jointly with the Atomic Energy Commission during Operation HARDTACK. The DOD would assume responsibility for delivering the warhead(s), the device(s) to be determined later, and for making measurements of essential effects data. The AEC should bear the responsibility of making diagnostic measurements, including the development of instrumentation and procurement of missiles therefor if required.

5. Action is being taken within the Department of Defense with a view to obtaining approval of a program which will meet the DOD requirements consistent with funding capabilities.

Herbert B. Loper  
Chairman

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U.S. Atomic Energy Commission  
Office of the Secretary

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