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COLLECTION R6 326 46-51 Secretary

April 25, 1947

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FOLDER 471.6 (4-21-47)

Sandstone Vol. 1

Gen'l McCormack Rank 8/6/47 Date

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Lt. General Lewis H. Brereton
Military Liaison Committee to
the Atomic Energy Commission
P. O. Box 1814
Washington, D. C.

Dear General Brereton:

The Atomic Energy Commission is convinced of the technical necessity for some further tests of atomic bombs. Our opinion in this respect is shared by all of our scientific and technical advisors, and I presume also by the Armed Forces.



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As a preliminary action, the Los Alamos Laboratory is, under high security, preparing the outline of a desired program, as approached from the scientific point of view. Since the Armed Forces must in the operational phase play a large part in effecting any such program, their earliest participation in planning should be most valuable.

4-25-47

The Commission has in mind a test far less elaborate than the Bikini operation. We think it wise for a number of reasons not to concern ourselves now with any further details of the effects of atomic explosives on military installations and equipment, but rather to direct our attention for the present to collecting some important data on the characteristics of the weapons themselves.

Obviously, there are a number of things to be done as preliminary steps to any future tests. The following comments will reflect the Commission's attitude on some of the primary points to be considered between the Commission and the Armed Forces:

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a. Because the broadest possible policy considerations are involved, the Commission has brought this matter to the President's attention in a preliminary way.

b. The Commission and the War and Navy Departments should now draft a proposal for approval by the President. Collaboration with the State Department will be required, and other Government agencies may be involved, although at a later stage.

c. It should be determined how many explosions are required and where the tests should be conducted.

d. It should be determined whether there should be exploded, as a matter of urgency, any specific type of bomb without waiting for the assembly of other types to make a complete test program.

e. The general categories of scientific information which is to be sought in these tests should be examined critically and reduced to the minimum essentials. Then, based on these minimum essentials, the logistical requirements for the test program should be outlined and the Armed Forces should agree to undertake whatever responsibilities are within their capabilities, and means should be sought for overcoming any major difficulties which may appear.

f. In view of the high policy considerations involved, every aspect of this matter, even the fact that tests are being considered, is obviously delicate in nature and should be most carefully guarded.

We suggest that when the Military Liaison Committee has considered this problem, a meeting of the Commission with the Committee will be in order as a prelude to a meeting of the minds on more specific details.

Very sincerely yours,

David E. Lilienthal
Chairman

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