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October 23, 1952

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IN REPLY
REFER TO:

LAB-963

DELETED VERSION ONLY

Brig. Gen. K. E. Fields, Director
Division of Military Application
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

No.

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REVIEWED BY

J. Diaz
12/29/84 4/22/86

Dear General Fields:

This is just a note to review the route by which we became confused, and finally straightened out I hope, on the question of the extent of future overseas test operations as decided in the conference held at Eniwetok October 7.

1. Morris Bradbury was told by Jack Clark who obtained the information from Milton Rex that it had been decided at the conference that each future operation in the Eniwetok-Bikini area be limited to not more than two shots of the megaton variety and two of the kiloton variety, perhaps as large as [redacted] and further that budgeting was being made on the basis of a total of four shots.

2. We assumed that the above implied one large and one small shot on Bikini and the same on Eniwetok. We could not understand the reasons for so stringent a limitation at Eniwetok and Morris asked me to inquire about it while in Washington last week.

3. In my first discussion with you and Capt. Hayward last Tuesday or Wednesday you told me that the decisions were that the limitations were one large and one small shot on Bikini and one large, two [redacted] and possibly an air drop on Eniwetok. This seemed entirely reasonable to me, and I assumed that we had just got our original information mixed up over the verbal route. The next day you asked me if I had this information straight and repeated what you had said the day before.

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[Redacted signature area]

Handwritten initials

October 23, 1952

4. On returning to Los Alamos I naturally informed Jack Clark of this understanding. He was very surprised that he could have been so wrong. Later that day, last Monday, Reube Cole came into Clark's office and confirmed the original story that the October 7 decision had been to limit any one series to two large and two small shots. Moreover, the FY 1954 budget proposals were based upon this assumption.

5. By this time Norris and I were thoroughly confused because we have been tentatively talking of one large and two small shots for Castle, and we have understood that Whitney was likely to propose two shots at least one of which was large. Therefore, I called you on the telephone but due to connection trouble you had gone to Mr. Dean's office by the time I got through and I spoke with Chick Hayward instead. Chick confirmed your original statement to me as indicated in 3. above but also confirmed that the budget proposal made to the Bureau of the Budget was based upon a maximum of four shots. This seemed contradictory to me, especially in view of our conversation just prior to your meeting with the Bureau of the Budget. However, Chick assured me that he believed the dollars requested would cover more than four shots. He specifically advised that we should not limit our planning for Castle by considering a ceiling of two shots to be proposed by Los Alamos if more seemed advisable and justifiable.

The result of all this is that LASL is proceeding upon the assumption of limitation of LASL participation in Castle to one shot in the megaton range, two tower or ground shots in the kiloton range up to approximately the size of ~~██████████~~ and one drop test. This would still allow one megaton type and one kiloton type open to Whitney. While it is not at all clear that we can devise or will wish to propose this many tests for Castle, we would be pleased to have our assumptions confirmed or corrected if they are still in error in some way.

ALOG

Incidentally, Morris plans to discuss with Al Graves and other members of the Task Force at Eniwetok the merits and disadvantages of a plan to divide overseas operations into two distinct parts as far as scientific work is concerned. Thus, LASEL would supply a scientific director to the Task Force for Eniwetok operations which would involve exclusively LASEL tests. Any work done there by Whitney personnel would be done as if Whitney were a subcontractor to LASEL, such as ERL or E. G. and G. For Bikini operations, the Task Force Commander would have a different scientific director supplied by Whitney and the LASEL-Whitney relationship would be exactly reversed. The same Task Force, construction contractors, etc., could easily be used at both places. The only problem would be to fix time schedules and this should be easy. Please understand that this is not a formal proposal but just an idea Morris is investigating to see if it might have some merit. We have not discussed it with Whitney personnel nor anyone else yet.

My visit to Washington last week was not only pleasant but very profitable for the Laboratory and the hospitality of DHA was up to its usual high standard.

Yours sincerely,
 Original signed by
 DAROL FROMAN
 Darol Froman

DF:b

Distribution:

- 1A - Brig. Gen. K. E. Fields
- 2A - Carroll L. Tyler ←
- 3A - Reuben Cole
- 4A - J. C. Clark
- 5A - A. C. Graves
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