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AEC 597/12

March 30, 1953

COPY NO. 13

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
CENSORSHIP - OPERATION CASTLE

Note by the Secretary

The attached letter from the Commander, Joint Task Force Seven is circulated for the information of the Commission.

ROY B. SNAPP
Secretary

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HEADQUARTERS
JOINT TASK FORCE SEVEN
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

24 March 1953

AG 380.01 X 300.4

SUBJECT: Censorship - Operation CASTLE

TO: Chairman
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
1901 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.
Attn: Director, Division of Security

Inclosed herewith for your information is a copy of a letter to the Chief of Staff, U. S. Army, Executive Agent, paragraph 3 of which refers to the question of censorship of mail during Operation CASTLE.

/s/
P. W. CLARKSON
Major General, USA
Commander

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1 Incl:
Ltr to CofS, US Army

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HEADQUARTERS
JOINT TASK FORCE SEVEN
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

24 March 1953

AG 300.4 X 380.01

SUBJECT: Comments on Operation Order CJTF 132
(7 Nov) No. 4-52

TO: Chief of Staff, U. S. Army
Executive Agent
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.
Attn: Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3

1. Reference is made to your letter of 9 March 1953, above subject. The following comments are submitted in compliance with paragraphs 2 and 3.

2. Reference paragraph 1a.

a. Formal Reports of Investigation on Army personnel made by the CIC Detachment will be forwarded to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Department of the Army, as appropriate.

b. Summaries of Information regarding Army personnel will be forwarded to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, when a new Executive Agent (other than Chief of Staff, U. S. Army) is designated for the Joint Task Force or when an individual concerned is relieved from duty with the Joint Task Force.

c. Notifications of clearance action on Army personnel have been and will continue to be forwarded to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2.

d. No specific directive is required to accomplish the disposition of these records.

3. Reference paragraph 1b(1)(2) and (3). **DOE ARCHIVES**

a. This headquarters and representatives of the AEC have made an extensive study of the desirability and feasibility of imposing censorship of personal mail for members of Joint Task Force SEVEN while in the forward area. As a result of this study, the following facts have been noted:

(1) It has been determined by the AEC that congressional action in the form of a statute would be required to institute censorship of mail to include AEC civilian personnel. It is desired to point out that the operations are, in fact, joint and not under the exclusive jurisdiction of the DOD.

[REDACTED] T

(2) The imposition of censorship on military personnel only would be ineffective since a large segment of Task Force personnel in the operational area are AEC civilians and contractor personnel. It would undoubtedly create a serious morale problem among the military personnel. Over-all censorship would seriously affect civilian morale and perhaps result in difficulty in employment of workers by Holmes and Narver.

(3) The operational phase will be of considerable length and many people will leave the operational area before completion of the operation. After these people arrive at Hawaii or the ZI, censorship cannot be enforced.

(4) Commander, Joint Task Force SEVEN has been directed by JCS to conduct Operation CASTLE on an austere basis. Additional personnel would be required to handle the censorship activity and thus impose a greater logistical burden on the Task Force.

(5) The legal complications affecting official censorship would probably cause undesired publicity and focus attention to the operation as one of unusual significance. The receipt of censored personal mail by relatives and friends would undoubtedly cause speculation as to their activities and consequently, greater efforts would be made by relatives and friends to learn more about their activities.

(6) There is no definite assurance that the imposition of censorship would serve to prevent all breaches of security.

4. In view of the foregoing, it is strongly recommended that:

a. An official release be made jointly by the AEC-DOD prior to the forward area operations, divulging as much factual information as possible consistent with security, and other official releases be made after each test in the forward area.

b. The policy of self-censorship of personal mail be continued without recourse to official censorship, backed up by an intensified security indoctrination and security education and examination program.

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P. W. CLARKSON
Major General, USA
Commander