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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Authority MR J-222#2
By GC 11/10/74



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Dear Mr. President:

In my letter of June 14, 1974, I presented for your consideration the problem of the development of a portable weapons laser system. I have since received information on these matters, particularly in the light of the events of the past year.

The most important points to be considered in this connection are:

- (1) The United States is the only country in the world which has a portable laser system.
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the absence of such tests would make progress to an appreciable degree.

It is my deep conviction that a moratorium on the testing of large thermonuclear weapons would lengthen the time during which the United States would maintain its advantage over the U.S.S.R. Our experience is so much more extensive that that of the Soviets that we could use tests of small weapons and of potentiality with greater advantage than they.



Then again, the United States does not plan to test large thermonuclear weapons for several years. Even when we have been able to detect of the Soviet Union we should expect that a series to take place this fall. Thus, if a general test ban the tests of large thermonuclear weapons is made now, the Soviets would be the first to be affected. If the Soviet Union were to violate the moratorium and then violate it within a year, the position would be unchanged. On the other hand, if the Soviet Union were to violate their agreement, our new tests of large weapons could be continued as the time for their agreement. It is my conviction that we should consider this proposal with the greatest care and with the most psychological viewpoint.

It has been suggested that a moratorium by the United States to limit tests of weapons with yields below a hundred kilotons would simply bring forth a similar moratorium by the Soviet Union, the upper limit being 100 kilotons. This is described as leading to the United States on a "subequal" basis. It is my conviction that a general test ban arrangements would be made which would prevent the United States at a disadvantage in this way.

Another reason for such a moratorium would be that due to advances based on the early ballistic missile and small, will eventually have the same test weapons, but one more for each weapons are rapidly decreasing. The production of these weapons in peace is still going on. A moratorium on tests of these weapons would tend to freeze the production of these weapons. It is my conviction now having them.

It is a wisdom that a moratorium of the type proposed would include provision for maintaining our lead by the United States.

I continue to believe that the moratorium of testing of large weapons in the nuclear weapons field. It is my conviction that the moratorium would preparations for tests of large weapons be continued with the same vigor as at present. It is my conviction that a moratorium would not stop the program of weapons development.

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In conclusion, the information available to me supports the view that, with appropriate safeguards, a moratorium on the testing of large thermonuclear weapons would help to maintain and advance our weapons superiority over the Soviets, and thus would be in the interests of the United States. Hence, it would be a forward step looking toward the realization of a world.

Knowing of your strong interest and leadership which itself relates to world peace, I have taken this occasion to share my views known to you. I have several acquaintances, including Senator and Commissioner Libby with my intention to express their most earnest and prayerful hope that these thoughts would be of assistance to you in your continuing search for the solution to the ever mounting threat of atomic devastation.

Respectfully yours,

James H. Libby
James H. Libby
Commissioner

The President
The White House

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