

AGREED CONCEPTS REGARDING ATOMIC WEAPONS



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1. FUNCTION OF THIS SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL IN ADVISING THE PRESIDENT ON USE OF ATOMIC WEAPONS

a. By law, the National Security Council is to "advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign and military policies relating to the national security." By direction of the President, the Special Committee of the National Security Council on Atomic Energy, consisting of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, is to "pass on the directives which I have to make, that affect all three of those Departments."

b. The above directives are interpreted to mean that the President wants the advice of the Special Committee before making any decision regarding the major production objectives of the atomic energy program, the preparatory deployment of atomic weapons, and the use of atomic weapons. This is not interpreted as limiting the statutory function of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as "the principal military advisers to the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense."

2. USE OF ATOMIC WEAPONS

In the event of a positive decision, the President would authorize the Secretary of Defense to use atomic weapons under such conditions as the President may specify.

3. ATOMIC WEAPONS STOCKPILE CUSTODY AND OPERATION

a. Custodial Responsibility. The Department of Defense should have custodial responsibility for stocks of atomic weapons outside of the continental United States and for such numbers of atomic weapons in the continental United States as may be needed to assure operational flexibility and military readiness for use subject to 2, above. The Atomic Energy Commission should maintain custodial responsibility for the remainder of the stockpile of atomic weapons.

b. Provision of Storage Facilities. Each agency should provide the facilities for storage of atomic weapons over which it maintains custodial responsibility. However, where custodial responsibility may be changed by Presidential directive without physical movement of weapons, reimbursement for existing storage facilities should not be required.

c. Physical Security and Operation of Storage Sites. In the interests of operational readiness and economy of personnel, the Department of Defense should provide the physical security and the services required for the operation of all storage sites for atomic weapons. For storage facilities for which the Atomic Energy Commission is responsible, the services provided by the Department of Defense should include normal administrative services, and, under the technical supervision of the Atomic Energy Commission, the performance of such maintenance, surveillance, modernization, and modification work as is determined appropriate for accomplishment at the site.

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority DR 84-251 #2  
BY bc NLE Date 10/6/84



d. Access to Atomic Weapons. The Department of Defense should provide the Atomic Energy Commission with surveillance information on atomic weapons under Department of Defense custody, and access to such weapons for such purposes as the Atomic Energy Commission may determine to be necessary, including the determination of the effects of environmental and operational conditions and rotation, modification and major retrofit programs.

4. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY REQUIREMENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ATOMIC WEAPONS

a. The Department of Defense should state its military requirements for numbers and types of atomic weapons, including the desired military characteristics thereof.

b. The Atomic Energy Commission should propose rates of production and production goals for weapon materials in the light of stated military requirements and of the Commission's capabilities for meeting these requirements.

c. The President, in the light of a and b above, will determine the atomic weapon production program.

d. In consonance with the responsibility of the Department of Defense to indicate the desired military characteristics of atomic weapons, the Department of Defense should establish appropriate criteria and conduct such tests and evaluations, beyond those conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission, as deemed necessary to ascertain the acceptability of weapons to meet these military characteristics.