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FOLDER MRA 7 Aug, v2

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M. Kolban

Honorable J. Edgar Hoover, Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
U. S. Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Hoover:

Transmitted herewith are copies of memoranda by members of the Atomic Energy Commission Washington staff concerning telephone calls on October 31, 1952 from Clay Blair, Jr., Washington correspondent of Life Magazine, and Immo Hobbing, Washington correspondent of Time.

It is observed that the memorandum on the Hobbing call states that Hobbing phoned about 4:15 p.m. on October 31 and in the course of the call stated: "We understand the H-bomb has just been set off." The memorandum on the Blair call reports that Andrew Berding, Department of Defense Director of Public Information, advised at 3:50 p.m. October 31, that he had just had a phone conversation with Berding\*, in the course of which Berding\* asserted that Life has positive knowledge that the Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Defense had exploded an H-bomb in the Pacific "three hours ago, at 2:15."

For your information, a thermonuclear device was detonated at Eniwetok at 2:15 p.m., Washington time, October 31, 1952.

The exact time of detonation of such test device (that is, accuracy within one minute) is secret information affecting the national defense. The fact that the detonation involved a thermonuclear device is "restricted data" under the Atomic Energy Act, of a Secret classification. The Atomic Energy Commission and Department of Defense releases forwarded herewith constitute the

\* Secretarial note - should be Blair

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J. Edgar Hoover

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sole information on the current tests which presently is authorized for public dissemination.

It is requested that the Federal Bureau of Investigation institute investigation for the purpose of determining the source of the Time - Life information and ascertaining whether a violation of the Atomic Energy Act or federal statutes is involved.

For your assistance in inquiring into this matter, and possible bearing on the case, you are advised that a report has been received to the effect that, apparently through administrative error on the part of elements of JTF 132, a radio message reflecting the time of the detonation (but not disclosing its thermonuclear character) was transmitted as unclassified (in the clear) from USS Shank at the Eniwetok test site to CINCPAC, Honolulu, and other Department of Defense installations, for the purpose of alerting certain Air Force components performing functions of interest to the long range detection program. This message was reportedly sent by the USS Shank at 2:20 p.m. Washington time, October 31, and was thereafter radio-relayed by CINCPAC at 5:22 p.m. Washington time, October 31, as unclassified (in the clear) to other Department of Defense installations. For your assistance, it is also noted that within the last few months, comments have appeared in the Alsops' columns (which as you know are now under investigation by your agency) to the effect that a thermonuclear device was to be detonated in the current Eniwetok tests.

Sincerely yours,

by *Gordon Dean*  
Gordon Dean  
Chairman

Enclosures:

Memo fm Salisbury dtd 10/31/52

Memo fm Thompson dtd 10/31/52

AEC, DOD release dtd 9/9/52 & 2/18/52

*Secretary note - not attached - on file in Office of the Secretary*

[REDACTED]