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By authority of U. S. Atomic Energy Commission

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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION - MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE

SEVENTY-SIXTH JOINT CONFERENCE

2:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 23, 1952

The conference convened at 2:30 p.m., in Room 213 with the following present:

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Gordon Dean
Henry D. Smyth
Thomas E. Murray
Eugene M. Zuckert

M. W. Boyer
Harold L. Price

Roy B. Snapp
Charles A. Perry

Brig. Gen. K. E. Fields
Paul C. Fine
Col. Marcus Cooper
Col. Houston
Gerard Smith

MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Robert LeBaron
Maj. Gen. H. G. Bunker
Rear Adm. G. C. Wright
Brig. Gen. H. McK. Roper
Col. K. F. Hertford
Capt. J. S. Russell, USN
Capt. R. P. Hunter, USN
Col. C. F. Ball
Lt. Col. J. A. Geddes

Also Present

Maj. Gen. H. B. Loper (AFSWP)

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
WITH DELETIONS

BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/OC
Carl Wilson
8/5/85

1. Proposed CASTLE Program

Mr. Dean initiated the discussion on the question of postponement of the CASTLE test of the for the fall of 1953 until the spring of 1954. He stated that fabrication of the would continue and that the weapon would be stockpiled at the proposed rate, unless it is superseded by a more attractive weapon. After discussion of the pros and cons of postponing such a test, Mr. LeBaron, recalled a military requirement,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

stated in June of 1952, for a number of [REDACTED] based on the anticipated production of Lithium-6.

The AEC outlined the developmental work going forward at Los Alamos and reported on the possible advantages of postponing CASTLE so as to test two additional thermonuclear weapons at the same time as the [REDACTED]. This would involve no delay in the emergency capability in thermonuclear weapons. With this understanding, the MLC agreed on the desirability of the postponement but asked that every effort be made to have CASTLE start by the end of February 1954.

With regard to the forces to be maintained in a standby status, the appropriate members of the MLC stated that the Air Force component would maintain an experienced nucleus of approximately 50% present strength; that the Navy component would drop to a small nucleus of staff officers, from which it would be necessary to build up anew for a spring test; and that the Army component would retain adequate forces in a standby status for the spring test.

Mr. Dean and General Fields explored the capabilities of the Services to execute a fall test in 1953 in the event exceptional progress is made in the development of a [REDACTED] and its test is deemed advisable based on information expected to become available in approximately three months. General Fields cautioned again that this latter test is only a possibility and definitely not a probability.

It was noted that the Executive Agency should be advised to plan for a test in the spring of 1954 and to maintain an emergency capability for a test in the fall of 1953.

Mr. Dean and Mr. Boyer stated that a letter to the DOD making a formal recommendation for the postponement of CASTLE

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is forthcoming and that it will request that the DOD provide for a possible move-up of the date of the test.

2. General Discussion

The Commission and the Committee discussed informally budgetary matters and their relationship to the activities of the DOD and the AEC.

3. Date of Next Conference

The date of the next conference was confirmed for January 22, 1953.

ROY B. SNAPP
Secretary
Atomic Energy Commission

RAYMOND P. HUNTER
Captain, U.S.N.
Executive Secretary
Military Liaison Committee

Department of Energy
Director's Office
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