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REPOSITORY INEL

COLLECTION Snaptran
D-10419 FPC#1 934971

XX BOX No. 434 850067
4-2-1-5-36 Press releases, draft

FOLDER of public announcement of
Snaptran tests

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USAEC, IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO

MACK C. CORBETT

AUGUST 14, 1963

USAEC, GERMANTOWN, MD.

INFO COPY FOR E. E. HALL, REPORTS & STATISTICS BR., DRD

FOR DUNCAN C. CLARK, DPI; ATTENTION: JAMES D. LYMAN, DPI; FROM

MACK C. CORBETT, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF INFORMATION. HERewith IS DRAFT

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT SNAPTRAN TESTING SERIES UNDERWAY AT NRTS FOR

PROPOSED ISSUANCE TO TRADE JOURNALS AND POPULAR PRESS FRIDAY,

AUGUST 16, 1963, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. EARLIEST HEADQUARTERS COORDINATION

AND REVIEW APPRECIATED. TEXT FOLLOWS:

"AEROSPACE REACTOR TESTING SERIES UNDERWAY AT NRTS

"A SERIES OF AEROSPACE REACTOR SAFETY TESTS DESIGNATED SNAPTRAN

(SNAP TRANSIENT) WAS INITIATED THIS WEEK AT THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION'S

NATIONAL REACTOR TESTING STATION, IDAHO, WITH ACHIEVEMENT OF A CONTROLLE

CHAIN REACTION (CRITICALITY) IN A SNAP 2/10A REACTOR.

"THE SNAPTRAN PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE SAFETY DATA FROM TESTS WHICH WILL

SIMULATE CONDITIONS OF TWO MAXIMUM CREDIBLE (THOUGH UNLIKELY) ACCIDENTS

THAT COULD DESTROY A SNAP 2/10A REACTOR FROM INADVERTENT CONTROL-DRUM

(MORE)

OFFICE Of: RL Blackledge, jr 8-14-63 SURNAME 3:00 p. m. DATE		OI MC Corbett 8-14-63				
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MOVEMENT RESULTING IN PREMATURE CRITICALITY DURING LAUNCH, OR ACCIDENTAL CRITICALITY BY WATER IMMERSION IN EVENT OF FAILURE TO REACH ORBIT.

"THE TESTING PROGRAM WILL BE DIVIDED INTO (1) DESTRUCTIVE POWER EXCURSIONS EMPLOYING BERYLLIUM REFLECTION OF NEUTRONS--THE NORMAL MEANS OF BRINGING SNAP 2/10A REACTORS CRITICAL--AND (2) WATER REFLECTION OF NEUTRONS, THE KIND OF CRITICALITY THAT COULD OCCUR SHOULD THE REACTOR FALL INTO THE OCEAN.

"OF PRINCIPAL INTEREST IS THE WATER-IMMERSION DESTRUCTIVE TEST SCHEDULED SOME TIME DURING NOVEMBER, DEPENDING ON OCCURRENCE OF THE PRECISE WEATHER CONDITIONS REQUIRED TO INSURE MAXIMUM SAFETY. THE CRITICAL EXPERIMENTS FOR THIS TEST ARE SCHEDULED TO BEGIN IN OCTOBER WITH A SNAP 2/10A REACTOR STRIPPED OF ITS BERYLLIUM REFLECTOR BUT SURROUNDED FOR CONTROL PURPOSES BY A NEUTRON ABSORBING SLEEVE OF BORON-ALUMINUM ALLOY. REMOVAL OF THE POISON SLEEVE UNDER WATER IS CALCULATED TO INDUCE IMMEDIATE CORE DESTRUCTION THROUGH WATER REFLECTION OF NEUTRONS, THUS SIMULATING THE MAXIMUM CREDIBLE ACCIDENT THAT COULD OCCUR IN OCEAN WATER.

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"SNAPTRAN ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED FOR THE REMAINDER OF AUGUST WILL CONSIST OF PREPARATIONS FOR TRANSIENT TESTING WITH THE BERYLLIUM-REFLECTED SYSTEM. THE ACTUAL DESTRUCTIVE TESTING OF THIS SYSTEM, CONSISTING OF TRANSIENT POWER EXCURSIONS OF INCREASING SEVERITY, IS NOT SCHEDULED TO START UNTIL JANUARY 1964.

"A PROPOSED THIRD SERIES OF SNAPTRAN TESTS IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE IN AUGUST 1964 AND CONTINUE THROUGH MARCH 1965, INVOLVING EXTENSIVE PHYSICS TESTING WITH A BERYLLIUM-REFLECTED SNAP2/10A REACTOR. A SECOND DESTRUCTIVE TEST MAY CLIMAX THIS SERIES TO SUBSTANTIATE THE RESULTS OF THE JANUARY 1964 SERIES.

"A FOURTH SNAPTRAN TEST SERIES IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 1965 THROUGH MARCH 1966 FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT OF FURTHER PHYSICS STUDIES WITH A SNAP 2/10A REACTOR CORE IMMERSSED IN WATER. THIS SERIES ALSO MAY END WITH A DESTRUCTIVE TEST IF EARLIER TESTS HAVE NOT PROVIDED SUFFICIENT DATA

"THE SNAPTRAN TEST SERIES ARE PART OF THE AEC'S NUCLEAR SAFETY PROGRAM AND ARE BEING CONDUCTED FOR THE AEC BY PHILLIPS PETROLEUM COMPANY'S ATOMIC ENERGY DIVISION. THE AEC'S PRIME CONTRACTOR FOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF SNAP 2/10A IS ATOMICS INTERNATIONAL, CANOGA PARK, CALIF."

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END REF: OI:RLB					
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