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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

SPECIAL OBSERVER PROGRAM FOR REDWING

Report to the General Manager by the Directors of Military Application, Classification, and Information Services

THE PROBLEM

1. To consider the details of a special Observer Program for Operation REDWING which will provide for observation of a megaton yield shot by U.S. news media and Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) representatives.

SUMMARY

2. The primary purpose of this observer program is to provide U.S. news media representatives an opportunity to report accurately the events associated with a test in order to promote public understanding of the necessity for weapons tests and of the safety precautions which are taken in the public interest. By this means we hope to counter effectively misrepresentations concerning REDWING and to offset attacks on weapons testing programs such as those which have occurred during the past two years.

3. A secondary purpose of this special program is to assist the Federal Civil Defense Administration by providing an opportunity for FCDA selected civil defense representatives to observe the events associated with a thermonuclear detonation in order

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that they may be better oriented with respect to civil defense problems and FCDA objectives.

4. The program visualized consists of observation of one large yield shot by about 16 U.S. news media representatives and about 20 Federal Civil Defense Administration representatives on the level of State and Regional Directors, supported by about 21 AEC and DOD classification, information and security specialists. The observers would gather in Hawaii at their own expense; proceed as a group to Kwajalein, berth and mess aboard ship at the dock in Kwajalein until called by Commander, JTF-7; proceed on selected island tours, view from ship and record on film a megaton yield shot (except for a selected few pooled representatives who would view and film the shot from an aircraft); return via ship (or plane) to Kwajalein, thence return to Hawaii by air.

5. The program contemplates pre-shot tours and briefings, live radio broadcasts, motion and still picture-photography, and teletype and telephoto reporting, all under appropriate security safeguards. Adequate communications, including fast air courier service to Hawaii or the West Coast, are vital to the success of the program. The general plan for handling and servicing the observers is contained in Appendix "A".

 A program, designed around this first shot, should promote favorable reporting of the entire series. The Department of Defense and the Joint Task Force agree that this is the most desirable shot for the purpose.

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7. The feasibility of the program is dependent on:

a. Adequate measures for controlling test observance in such manner as to prevent revelation of classified information;

b. Availability of a suitable ship which possesses adequate communications and accommodations;

c. Availability of suitable aircraft for transportation, observation, and courier purposes; and

d. Estimated cost of program, and availability of funds.

8. The program is based on the premise that the special observers involved will not have access to classified information. It is considered necessary, however, to declassify the following presently classified information for the special observer program:

a. Advance notice of the expected date of detonation of the selected shot (now Confidential - Defense Information);

b. The yield of the selected shot is expected to be (and was) several megatons (now Confidential - Restricted Data);

c. The selected shot is to be (and was) an airburst (now Confidential - Restricted Data);

d. The code word REDWING when associated with the 1956 test operation (now Confidential - Defense Information); and

e. Information that the test detonation has taken place (prior to the official AEC-DOD announcement)(now Confidential - Defense Information).

9. The Division of Security is concerned as to the possibility of inadvertent disclosure of classified information, but believes that the possibility of such compromise can be minimized with appropriate security measures which will not interfere unduly with the objectives of the program. Such measures will include isolation of the special observers, carefully prepared briefings,

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properly regulated aerial and ground tours and strict control of photography. A detailed Security Plan will be required.

10. The Department of Defense plans to make the USS Mount McKinley (AGC7) available in Kwajalein commencing April 25, 1956. The ship will accommodate 60 to 80 cabin class passengers and is fitted with extensive communications facilities. However, special communications equipment, including government furnished teletype and commercial high quality voice radio, needs to be installed. The schedule is very tight and therefore the additional government equipment is now being installed at the Naval Shipyard in Pearl Harbor. It is doubtful that commercial voice radio equipment can be made available at Pearl Harbor soon enough to permit installation in the time available, but if this can be accomplished communications are expected to be adequate.

11. Military aircraft are allocated for the transportation of observers from Honolulu to Kwajalein, and return. The Department of Defense presently is investigating the availability of suitable aircraft for observation and courier purposes.

12. At this stage in the planning it is impossible to make an accurate cost estimate for the operation. Assuming that the DOD will provide the necessary ship and aircraft without charge except for modifications, it is roughly estimated that costs will not exceed \$200,000.

STAFF JUDGMENTS

13. The Division of Biology and Medicine, and the Office of the General Counsel concur in the recommendation of this paper.

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14. The Division of Security advises that it is concerned as to the possibility of inadvertent disclosure of classified information, but is of the view that the possibility of such compromise can be minimized with appropriate security controls.

15. The Division of Finance states that no funds in excess of 200,000 are presently available to the AEC in the current financial plan for this purpose, and that any additional costs must be absorbed by the Weapons Program or that necessary funds must be withdrawn from amounts currently available to other AEC programs.

#### CONCLUSIONS

16. It is concluded that:

a. The News Media/FCDA observer program for Operation REDWING described in Appendix "A" is feasible;

b. The general program outlined in Appendix "A" should achieve the aims set forth in paragraphs 2 and 3 above;

c. Department of Defense support of, and assistance in working out the details of, the program is required;

d. A security plan must be prepared jointly with the DOD and CJTF-7; and

e. The classified information outlined in paragraph 8 above must be declassified in order to achieve the objectives of this program.

#### RECOMMENDATION

17. The General Manager recommends that the Atomic Energy Commission:

a. Approve the general plan for a News Media/FCDA Observer Program for Operation REDWING, as outlined in Appendix "A";

b. Determine that the information listed in paragraph 8 above may be published without constituting an undue risk to the common defense and security;

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c. Authorize the establishment of a Joint Office of Test Information for the News Media/FCDA Observer Program, to be under the direction of the Commander, JTF-7 in the forward area;

d. Note that the DOD has concurred in the feasibility of a special observer program, and that DOD comments with respect to b, above as well as assistance in finalizing the details of the program will be requested by letter such as Appendix "B";

e. Note that the JCAE has been advised of plans to have a special observer program; and

f. Note that a security plan will be prepared jointly by AEC, DOD and JTF-7.

LIST OF ENCLOSURES

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APPENDIX "A"

GENERAL PLAN FOR HANDLING MEDIA AND FCDA REPRESENTATIVES

A. SELECTION

1. The proposed quota of about 16 media representatives, is based upon the minimum requirements for pool coverage from the various media that can be handled with the minimum additional burden on the Task Force Commander. This quota covers representatives of wire services and independent newspapers, radio and TV networks, newsreel and still picture cameramen, periodicals including weekly news magazines, and the U. S. Information Agency.

2. Allotments among the media and selection of media representatives would probably be established by the Congressional Standing Committees of Correspondents, the Radio and Television Correspondents Association, the Periodical Press Galleries and the White House News Photographers Association.

3. The 20 FCDA representatives would be selected by the Administrator, FCDA.

B. ACCREDITATION

4. The Department of Defense has an established accreditation system for correspondents throughout the United States, which is considered the equivalent of an agency file check. This system could be extended to correspondents selected to attend the tests who do not currently hold such accreditation. The Department of Defense Public Information Office has expressed willingness to do this.

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Appendix "A"

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5. Arrangements will be made to get accredited correspondents admitted to the Trust Territory and to the Proving Ground. The latter requires waiving of certain regulations governing security areas at Eniwetok and Bikini and certain requirements for clearance of personnel. Details of such arrangements are to be included in the specific security plans.

6. The Administrator, FCDA, will certify the FCDA representatives on the basis of a suitable background check.

C. TRANSPORTATION

7. Observers qualifying to attend the test would furnish their own transportation to Honolulu and proceed by military aircraft from Honolulu to Kwajalein when notified by the Joint Task Force Commander.

8. Observers will board Mt. McKinley, the ship being furnished by the Navy, at Kwajalein. This ship will be their base from about April 26, 1956, until after the detonation and their disembarkation at Kwajalein for return to Honolulu by air.

9. If feasible, a pre-shot air tour of Eniwetok Atoll would be scheduled with a stop at Eniwetok Island for a briefing session with the Commander, Joint Task Force SEVEN, or his representative, with return to Kwajalein the same day.

10. After arriving off Bikini, observers will be permitted ashore at Enyu and, if security considerations and operations permit, may be given an aerial tour of the Bikini Atolls.

D. BRIEFINGS

11. While ashore and/or on shipboard, briefing sessions will be held for the observers to provide unclassified information on:

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Appendix "A"

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- a. The purpose of conducting tests in the Pacific.
- b. The general mission of the Joint Task Force.
- c. Precautions to safeguard public health and safety
- d. Methods of monitoring.
- e. Weather forecasting.
- f. Civil defense interests related to the tests.
- g. Status and condition of Rongelap and Utirik inhabitants.
- h. Contributions of test related biological and medical experiments to civilian applications.
- i. Fallout reports.
- j. Any significant mishap.

E. COMMUNICATIONS

12. Transmission of news copy by TWX circuits, broadcasts by voice circuits and picture transmission by telephoto would be handled from the Mt. McKinley to Hawaii where the media will pick up for transmission on commercial lines.

13. Limited availability of transmission circuits of all types will require representatives of the media to draw lots for preferred transmission time. Committees representing press, radio-TV, photos and periodicals will be established to handle this and other problems and to represent the various media groups in making known recommendations.

14. A limited number of correspondents will be permitted to observe the detonation from the air. Air to ship communications may be arranged.

15. In event of conflict it should be clearly understood that operational communications will have priority.

Appendix "A"

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F. SECURITY OF INFORMATION

16. Correspondents will be informed the test shot is rated at a yield of "several megatons."
17. All briefing materials will be reviewed in advance by AEC classification and DOD security review officers.
18. Approved aerial and/or ground tours of Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls will be permitted.
19. Photography on tours will be limited by security requirements.
20. Photography on Shot Day will be prohibited between Shot Time and Shot Time-plus-15-seconds except for monitored photography of personnel and shipboard scenes at locations away from Zero point. Cameras lenses facing the detonation will be capped until Shot Time plus 15 seconds, the capping being released by monitors upon a signal over the ship's P.A. system at H plus 15 seconds.
21. Official photographs, covering the period between Shot Time and Shot Time plus 15 seconds will be made available for the media after security review.
22. Binoculars will be prohibited.
23. To the extent feasible media representatives and civil defense observers will be segregated from Task Force cleared personnel except during tours and briefings.
24. Approximate distance of the news ship, to the nearest mile, from ground Zero, will be furnished to the newspapermen and civil defense representatives. Height of burst would remain classified.

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25. All observers will be required to sign agreements aimed at assuring their compliance with rules of conduct governing their activities in the forward area. Violation of the rules will result in the expulsion of any offender.

G. PUBLIC INFORMATION ORGANIZATION

26. A Joint AEC-DOD information organization under the operational direction of CJTF-7 in the forward area will be established including personnel, as appropriate from AEC and DOD, for information services, security, classification, communications, transportation and billeting duties. In addition, Liaison officers will be required as follows:

a. JTF liaison officer assigned to Joint Information Office on Mt. McKinley.

b. Representative of Joint Information Office on JTF Commander's ship.

c. CINCPAC liaison officer assigned to Joint Information Office.

d. Liaison officer at Honolulu when newsmen are enroute.

e. Liaison officer and conducting officers on aircraft during detonation.

f. Classification and security review officers at Los Angeles and possibly at New York for review of official photography sent by air courier.

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APPENDIX "B"

DRAFT LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN, MLC

1. Considering developments during and subsequent to Operation CASTLE, the Commission believes that news media representation at one shot in Operation REDWING is desirable to provide opportunity for accurate reporting of events as a means of promoting public comprehension of test objectives, dispelling misrepresentations and offsetting attacks on test programs. The Secretary of Defense agreed that such representation is desirable and his office, in letter of February 29, 1956, expressed the belief that a feasible plan, with appropriate security safeguards, could be arranged. Accordingly, the Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Defense staffs jointly have prepared a tentative plan and are at present working out the details of a program.

2. The program visualized consists of observation of the large yield shot scheduled for May 1, 1956 by about 16 U.S. news media representatives and about 20 Federal Civil Defense Administration representatives on the level of Regional or State Directors, supported by about 20 AEC and DOD classification, information and security specialists. The observers would gather in Hawaii at their own expense, proceed as a group by military aircraft to Kwajalein, berth and mess aboard ship at the dock in Kwajalein until called forward by the Commander, Joint Task Force SEVEN, proceed on selected island tours, view from ship (or single aircraft) and record on film a megaton yield shot return via ship (or plane) to Kwajalein, thence return to Hawaii by air.

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3. FCDA participation in the program will provide an opportunity for selected state and regional FCDA directors to observe the events associated with a thermonuclear detonation in order that they may be better oriented with respect to civil defense problems and FCDA objectives.

4. The program is based on the premise that the special observers involved will not have access to classified information. In keeping with this premise and in order to achieve the objectives of the program, the Commission has determined that the following information may be published without constituting an undue risk to the common defense and security:

a. Advance notice of the expected date of detonation of the selected shot (now Confidential - Defense Information);

b. The yield of the selected shot is expected to be (and was) several megatons (now Confidential - Restricted Data);

c. The selected shot is to be (and was) an airburst (now Confidential - Restricted Data);

d. The code word REDWING when associated with the 1956 test operation (now Confidential - Defense Information); and

e. Information that the test detonation has taken place (prior to the official AEC-DOD announcement) (now Confidential - Defense Information).

5. Your comments on the declassification action specified above are requested.

6. As a basis for funding, it is proposed that the Department of Defense fund for the operating expense of ships and aircraft involved and provide all necessary equipment; Atomic Energy Commission will bear the costs of installing communications equipment and modifications of ships and aircraft incident to such installation.

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Appendix "B"

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