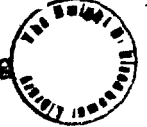


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9 February, 1953

AVAILABLE



These notes are based on (a) talks with two able Assistants to AEC Commissioners, (b) reading the approved Atomic Energy policies, (c) reading the two 90-page chronologies issued by the Joint Congressional Committee, (d) briefing by Military Liaison Committee of DOD (Mr. LeBaron).

1. The AEC is sincerely disturbed by its isolation: its lack of accurate knowledge of how military requirements are determined; its doubt whether the terrible issues involved have been fully explored.

a. Isolation. The statute set atomic energy carefully apart under civilian controls and very high classifications, with a view principally to peaceful use. Actually almost all the AEC work and expenditure is devoted to military use. The AEC is not represented on the Cabinet or on the NSC (except via the Special Committee of NSC for AE). It feels that its views, needs, and vast importance are not represented in integrated, over-all national planning. Yet the use of atomic energy in war and, on proper development, in peace is of critical importance and affects all national planning, and pretty soon the AE industry with ten billions invested will be the biggest in America and growing rapidly.

b. Lack of accurate knowledge of how military requirements are determined. The AEC feels that neither it nor anyone has sufficient knowledge to be sure that military requirements are accurately determined. For a while, AEC felt those requirements were based on what it could produce rather than on what was militarily determined to be needed. Later, it felt that the requirements were based on MacMahon pressure and Soviet-scare to produce as much as quick as possible. Also, as the Military Liaison Committee under LeBaron has grown in importance, AEC feels more remote than ever from DOD and uncertain whether it may be receiving through MLC information based on the up-and-down swings of inter-service rivalry rather than on rounded, considered DOD judgment.

c. Doubt whether the terrible issues involved have been fully explored. Some of these questions were raised in the December/52 report on AEC-DOD relations:

(1) Atomic power is not "just another weapon" - have we assessed the implications of dropping our capability on Russian targets?

(2) Are we prepared to go ahead with strategic atom bombing of Russia if Russia indicates she will bomb NATO in reprisal?

(3) How shall we defend the US from Russian bombing attack launched in the first instance, or initiated by a Russian act of aggression without use of atomic bombs?

(4) What requirements is the H-bomb to fulfill? Is it really

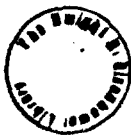
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superior to the newer A-bombs? Can either be really delivered to Russian targets?

In November/49 the General Advisory Committee of AEC, chiefly on moral grounds, hoped that the development of H-bombs might be avoided.



The AEC personnel are honestly and seriously disturbed. Their doubts and worries cannot be lightly brushed aside. The views which they express are not Empire-building. In fact, several feel that weapon productions and development should be under DOD, leaving to AEC peace use, research and development.

2. The AEC suggestions to cure these problems are varied, but can be fairly summarized thus:

a. to alleviate isolated position, give AEC a place at Cabinet or NSC table so that it may participate in integrated policy making.

b. bring about a closer relation between AEC and DOD, now blocked rather than aided by the NSC. The Special Committee on Atomic Energy of NSC serves to settle great policy questions, but there are continuing operating problems to be settled with fuller knowledge on both sides.

c. be sure that at NSC level the terrible issues relative to using atomic energy are understood and freshly resolved. By full, periodic briefings, educate better our top echelon to AE problems.

3. Other points:

a. Uranium "shortage" is based on low price paid to foreign producers - a fraction of what is paid for gold.

b. Essential to have South Africa friendly and cooperative; thence will come our largest uranium supply.

4. Two years or so ago the military pressed for additional AE productive facilities. The AEC was unsympathetic: (i) too great expense, (ii) when facilities completed and military requirements then more quickly met, what then do with "white elephant"? The Military won and the additional facilities were created. Now it looks as if the presently-stated military requirements might be met by 1957. As the AE stockpile does not waste, what then does US do with its ten billion dollar investment? DOD is now tentatively suggesting that we should plan in immediately ensuing years to devote a small part of our total growing stockpile for military use to beginning the set-up of pilot studies of a reactor mechanism* for later civilian use in producing electricity.

* In lay language - a bomb explosion is rapid use of AE; a peace usage like electricity power is slow use of AE via a reactor mechanism.

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