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UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

408998

December 2, 1952

MEMORANDUM

TO : Mr. James S. Lay, Jr.
Executive Secretary
National Security Council
Executive Office of the President
Washington 25, D. C.

SUBJECT: PROPOSED STATEMENT ON EFFECT OF THERMONUCLEAR
WEAPONS RESEARCH ON CIVIL DEFENSE PLANNING

Decision "f" of the Psychological Strategy Board on psychological exploitation of certain thermonuclear developments, transmitted with your letter of September 17, indicates to me that for the present at least all official statements relating to the thermonuclear phases of the recent Eniwetok tests should be considered by the Special Committee of the National Security Council on Atomic Energy.

Accordingly, I am referring for such consideration if it is believed desirable by NSC, a proposed statement by the Acting FCDA Administrator commenting on the effect on civil defense planning of the thermonuclear phases of the Eniwetok tests. This statement has been found not to contain Restricted Data under the Atomic Energy Act of 1946. Its issuance, however, would raise questions of impact in the psychological strategy field, and it therefore is submitted for review by the NSC.

Gordon Dean
Chairman

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D. G. [unclear]

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STATEMENT BY ACTING FCDA ADMINISTRATOR J. J. WADSWORTH

FCDA Acting Administrator J. J. Wadsworth today released the following statement to State and local Civil Defense Directors:

"The announcement by the Atomic Energy Commission that further experiments have been carried out 'contributing to thermonuclear weapons research' reflects a matter of continuing interest to the nation's civil defense officials.

"Federal Civil Defense has taken into account the progress of such research since its earliest planning and has had observers at this and earlier tests.

"Civil Defense Directors will recall that on January 31, 1950, President Truman directed the AEC 'to continue to work on all forms of weapons including the so-called hydrogen or super-bomb'.

"On June 17, 1951, the AEC and the Defense Department announced in their joint report on the Greenhouse test series in the Pacific that 'Both military and Civil Defense leaders, noting that there has been an improvement in weapons design, must necessarily plan on the basis of weapons several times more powerful than the Hiroshima-Nagasaki, or nominal weapons'.

"Civil Defense damage and casualty estimates were increased at that time and continuous study has been given to the effects of even larger weapons.

"Regardless of the nature of the thermonuclear weapons research at Eniwetok, civil defense must continue to anticipate the development of hydrogen bombs by unfriendly nations.

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"Based on present knowledge, the future threat of the hydrogen bomb will not alter the fundamental concept of national civil defense. FCDA has stated repeatedly that any city hit with atomic weapons would require outside help. Consequently, we have urged the organization of the entire nation so that mutual aid and mobile support can be sent to stricken areas in the event of enemy attack.

"Inaccurate and exaggerated estimates of the effects of hydrogen bombs may lead people to believe that nothing can be done to protect ourselves against such weapons. This is definitely not true. The effects of any weapons can be minimized through adequate Civil Defense preparedness."

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