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24 JULY 1968

CUSTODY OF ATOMIC WEAPONS
Historical Summary of Principle Actions (U)

DATE

SUMMARY

1948

Atomic Energy Act of 1946

Assigned all organizations and properties of the Manhattan Project to the AEC.

30 Dec 46

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from Secretary of War

In connection with discussion concerning storage bases the letter states in part, "I anticipate that when the matter has been reviewed by the President, he will direct that a certain number of bombs and bomb parts be turned over to the armed services and that these bombs and bomb parts will be wholly within the custody of the armed services which are charged with the national defense".

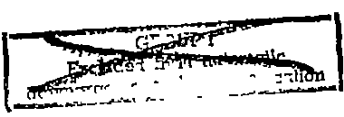
31 Dec 46

Executive Order 9816

Implemented the Atomic Energy Act of 1946. It stated that all fissionable material and all atomic weapons and parts remaining from the Manhattan Project would be transferred to the AEC. It further provided that AEC would deliver fissionable material or weapons to the Armed Forces in the interest of National Defense. (See Sec. 1, 2(c), and 4(e) and Sec. 6(a) of the Atomic Energy Act.

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1 Jan 47

Armed Forces Special Weapons Project Established

AFSWP ordered to assume responsibility for all military service functions of the Manhattan Project "as are retained under control of the Armed Forces." Included was the mission to participate in weapons development in coordination with the AEC.

4 Sep 47

Memorandum for Secretaries of War and Navy "Delivery of Atomic Weapons to the Armed Forces"

MLC recommends that all atomic weapons when ready for stockpile be delivered to the Armed Forces; that the AFSWP assume custody of weapons so delivered and assume responsibility for storage and surveillance with technical assistance from the AEC.

16 Dec 47

Memorandum for the Chairman, AEC from the Chairman, MLC

Transmits copies of correspondence between MLC and the three Departments regarding delivery of atomic weapons to the Armed Forces. Incloses also a presentation of the views of the MLC.

1 Mar 48

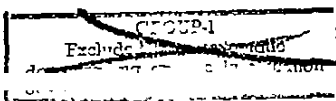
AEC Report by Programs Council

Custody of Atomic Weapons.

11 Mar 48

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, MLC

Incloses AEC staff study on technical considerations together with a summary of MLC views. MLC recommends that "the Secretary of Defense recommend to the



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President that the responsibility for stockpile and surveillance of atomic weapons, with necessary assistance from the AEC, be assigned to the Armed Forces without delay".

19 Mar 48

Letter to The President from the Secretary of Defense

A progress report.

7 Apr 48

Memorandum for D.F. Carpenter from Ex/Secy/MIC

"Review of correspondence concerning custody of atomic weapons."

16 Apr 48

Memorandum of Conversation with Senator Hickenlooper by the Chairman, MIC (Carpenter)

26-27 May
1948

Minutes of the meeting contain a statement of principle regarding transfer of custody as presented by the Chairman, MIC.

14 Jun 48

Memorandum to the Chairman, AEC from the Chairman, MIC

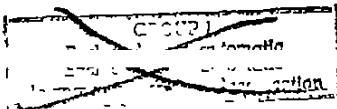
Proposes transfer of custody urging the AEC join the Secretary of Defense in recommending to the President the transfer of custody and submitting a draft of a proposed letter to the President.

30 Jun 48

Meeting in Office of the Secretary of Defense

(Present were Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army, Chairman, MIC, Chairman, RDB, Ch/AFSWP and five AEC Commissioners)

It was generally understood that the President should decide the issue and that the AEC would



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present a parallel paper to the President when the Secretary of Defense requests a decision.

21 Jul 48

AEC Memorandum to the President with Regard to the Question of Custody

In brief, the Commission's position reflects concern over the division of responsibility civilian and military and the fact that surveillance of atomic weapons is of an entirely different order of complexity and significance than is the case with even the most complicated ordinary weapons.

Lists the important steps that have already been taken to assure a maximum state of readiness.

21 Jul 48

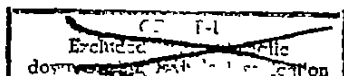
Letter to the President from the Secretary of Defense

Letter urges the President to "advise the AEC that delivery to the Armed Forces of stockpile atomic weapons will be directed, effective approximately four months hence". Incloses letter to Secretary of Defense of 13 March 1948 from Secretaries of Army, Navy and Air Force and letter from JCS of 20 March 1948, both of which recommend transfer of custody as a matter of urgency.

22 Jul 48

Memorandum of Items of Particular Interest at Radiation Laboratory of the University of California, signed by D.F. Carpenter, Chairman, MLC

Gives Dr. Lawrence's personal view of transferring



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atomic weapons to the Armed Forces and the competence of the Services to maintain custody.

23 Jul 48

Presidential Refusal

The President refused to transfer custody of atomic weapons to the Armed Forces despite unanimous recommendations for approval from the four Service Secretaries, the Chiefs of Staff of Army, Navy and Air Force and the MLC.

24 Jul 48

Presidential Release to the Press

"As President of the United States, I regard the continued control of all aspects of the atomic energy program, including research, development and the custody of atomic weapons, as the proper functions of the civil authorities."

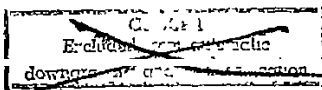
28 Jul 48

Secretary of Defense Forrestal notified JCS of President's decision of 23 July and stated "In light of this decision, it is of utmost importance to the national defense that plans for emergency transfer of atomic weapons be reviewed"

6 Aug 48

Letter from the President to the Secretary of Defense

States "On balance, I do not feel justified in exercising my authority under the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 to order the transfer of the stockpiles to the Armed Services".



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6 Aug 48

Memorandum of Conversation Between Senator Hickenlooper and the Chairman, AEC

"Senator stated that he thought the President's decision referring to custody was illogical and that the military should have custody of some, if not all, of the atomic bombs."

19 Aug 48

Chart of National Military Establishment and AEC Command Channels for Emergency Transfer

Chart attached.

20 Oct 48

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from Chairman, AEC, William Webster subj: Custody

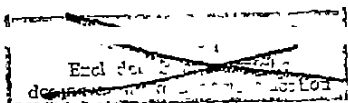
Explains custody and surveillance responsibilities to date.

11 May 49

AEC-AFSWP Agreement on Operation and Maintenance of Storage Sites Able, Baker and Charlie

Signed by DoD on 20 April 1949 and by AEC on 11 May 1949. This agreement provided for joint occupancy by the AEC and AFSWP. It stated that AFSWP was primarily concerned with support of operations in the event of national emergency and with support of training exercises and maneuvers. AEC would be responsible for custody of all stockpile items in storage or undergoing inspection. AFSWP would be responsible for custody of AEC weapons released for AFSWP training and maneuvers.

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11 May 49

Agreement Between AEC-DoD on Storage Site Operation and Maintenance

See Annex

28 Sep 49

Memorandum for the Chief, OST Division, AFSWP from Chief, AFSWP subj: Working Group on Future Storage of Atomic Weapons

This memorandum represents the first action in the establishment of a Joint Board for Future Storage.

22 Mar 50

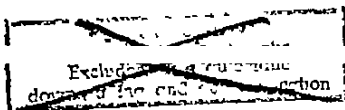
Letter from Mr. LeBaron to Mr. Early "Surveillance and Custody of Atomic Weapons"

The passage of time, training, experience and knowledge gained by the Military personnel who have been involved in the task, render the questions which were brought up at President's 24 July 1948 meeting, no longer pertinent. The acquisition of this experience and technical knowledge was a necessary pre-requisite to development of a capability on the part of the Armed Forces for actual utilization of the weapon in emergency and present technical competence is a natural condition arising from this requirement.

6 Apr 50

Memorandum for the Chairman, MLC from Chief, AFSWP subj: Requirements for Atomic Bombs

Requests 90 non-nuclear Mark 4 stockpile bombs be released for permanent custody and use by AFSWP and Services for training.



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10 Apr 50

Memorandum to the Chairman, MLC from Gen Nichols, Chief, AFSWP subj: Military Participation in Custody for Surveillance of Atomic Weapons

Discusses the entire surveillance program by the AFSWP. "In June 1950, when the present AFSWP training objective is attained for assembly and technical personnel, there will be available in AFSWP more than 1800 trained military personnel available for custody, surveillance and rear depot operations and maintenance and operational support including a reserve for the Navy and SAC".

10 Apr 50

Memorandum for the Chairman, MLC from Charles F. Brown, Counsel from the AEC subj: Custody of Atomic Weapons

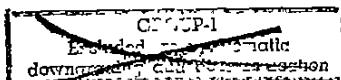
Renders a legal opinion as to the custody of atomic weapons. "It seems clear that the President may direct the Commission to transfer atomic bombs or parts thereof to the DoD and there is no provision of law which would prevent the DoD from receiving weapons and parts so transferred".

Early Summer
1950

(5/3/50)
(4/6/50)
(6/3/50)

Beginning of Korean Conflict

It was decided that bombs, minus nuclear components, would be delivered to the custody of the Air Force and Navy at Operational Storage Sites abroad and aboard carriers. The nuclear components would remain in custody of the AEC in the United States pending further decision in the future.



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14 Jun 50

Transfer for Training President approved.

10 Jul 50

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from Omar N. Bradley, Chairman, JCS subj: Storage of Non-Nuclear Components of Atomic Bombs in the United Kingdom

"In view of the seriousness of the present world situation, it has been decided to station two additional medium bomb groups in the U.K., bringing the total number to three. The JCS believe that an adequate quantity of non-nuclear components of atomic bombs should be stored in the U.K. in order to exploit fully the capabilities of these groups.

11 Jul 50

Letter to the President from the Secretary of Defense (Johnson)

Recommends transfer of custody of _____ non-nuclear components for storage in the U.K.

4 Aug 50

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Chairman, MLC

AFSWP has taken action to get _____ non-nuclear assemblies to Guam. "It is my understanding that the above action was approved by the President at a meeting on the morning of 29 July 1950 with the Secretary of Defense and General Bradley, as a result of recommendations to the President from the JCS."

10 Aug 50

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from Gen. Bradley, Chairman, JCS subj: Storage of Non-Nuclear Components of Atomic Bombs in CVB Class Aircraft Carriers

"Specifically the JCS recommend that Presidential

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10 Aug 50
(Cont'd)

approval be obtained to transfer custody of [redacted] non-nuclear components of atomic bombs for storage in the [redacted] prior to the scheduled departure of that ship for the [redacted].

*Note: Actually delivery was made [redacted]

**Note: A similar dispersal was made for the [redacted]

17 Aug 50

Memorandum for the Deputy Secretary of Defense
"Storage and Custody of Atomic Weapons (Non-Nuclear Components) gives Summary of Views Resulting from MIC Study"

"It is my hope that we can think through the fundamentals of this custody problem before the pattern of events in the growing world tensions force us into a decision of expediency."

18 Aug 50

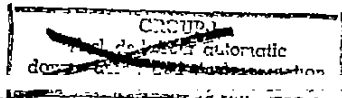
Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from General Bradley Chairman, JCS subj: Deployment of Strategic Air Command Units

"It is therefore, urged that you secure immediate Presidential approval for the transfer of [redacted] additional non-nuclear components from AEC to SAC. These components are to be moved to [redacted]

24 Aug 50

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the President

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by Public Law 585, 80th Congress, and on the recommendation



10
LAW 585, 80th Congress, and on

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SECTION 1145 ATOMIC ENERGY ACT 1954

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24 Aug 50
(Cont'd)

of the Secretary of Defense, I have approved delivery of non-nuclear components of atomic weapons from AEC to the Armed Forces for strategic deployment as follows:

11 July 1950	components	
29 July 1950	components	
11 August 1950	components	
22 August 1950	components	

This will serve as authority for the deliveries which you have made at my direction.

It is noted that the [redacted] components listed above for deployment on 29 July 1950 were withdrawn from the 90 components authorized on 14 June 1950 to be transferred to the Armed Forces for training.

Delivery was made to the U.K. Gasm, [redacted] [redacted] (See also 5/29/51).

25 Aug 50

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the President (Truman)

The President desires that the Committee of the National Security Council on Atomic Energy pass all directives that affect all three departments.

25 Aug 50

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the President

Notifies the Secretary of Defense of the desire that the Committee of the National Security Council on Atomic Energy will pass all directives that affect all three departments.

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20 Sep 50

History - Emergency Transfer of Weapons

2 Oct 50

Memorandum for Maj. Gen. Nichols, Loper, Hill etc.

Subject - Custody of Atomic Weapons referencing
MLC Staff Study "Custody of Atomic Weapons", dated
2 October 1952.

5 Dec 50

Letter to Mr. Lay from Chairman, AEC (Dean)

Discusses the return of non-nuclears from [redacted]
[redacted]

9 Mar 51

AEC-MLC Meeting

It was brought out at this meeting that the military had
been performing functional surveillance on the entire
stockpile, including nuclear components, for sometime.
AEC expressed surprise at this information. Mr. Dean,
AEC, stated that the AEC custody was "an empty concept"
and that the "real problem" was in establishing the
proper division of responsibility for stockpile operations.

6 Apr 51

Memorandum for the Chairman, AEC from the President
(Truman)

Directed in the Interest of National Defense, to
release the custody of _____ nuclear and _____
non-nuclear atomic bomb components to Gen Hoyt S.
Vandenberg, Chief of Staff, USAF, who is my personal

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SECTION 144b, ATOMIC ENERGY ACT 1954

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6 Apr 51
(Cont'd)

representative for this custody. In this capacity Gen Vanderberg is acting as the executive agent of the JCS.

11 Apr 51

Letter to the President from the Chairman, AEC (Dean)

The recent transfer to Gen. Vandenberg of custody of certain nuclear and non-nuclear components marks the end of the Commission's civilian responsibility over a portion of our war reserve of atomic weapons concerned over how the weapons may be used.

28 May 51

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, MLC

The following is quoted from this memorandum and describes the situation surrounding the decision for the first transfer of non-nuclears.

"It may be pertinent to outline the circumstances that immediately preceded the 25 August letter to the President. Shortly after the invasion of Korea in June 1950, Secretary Johnson asked the President for authority to receive a considerable number of non-nuclear atomic assemblies from AEC for delivery to the military establishment at points outside the United States. The President concurred and the movement was carried out."

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3 Aug 51

AEC-DoD Agreement on "Responsibilities for Stockpile Operations"

See Annex

29 Jun 52

Memorandum to the National Security Council subj: Overseas Storage of Atomic Weapons

Requests Presidential approval for the deployment of additional non-nuclear components to the U.K., Guam,  and to aircraft carriers. Such deployments will make significant increases in readiness status.

22 Jul 52

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense and Chairman, AEC from James Lay

The President has this date authorized the transfer of _____ additional non-nuclear to meet requirements for deployment during remainder of calendar year 1952 (overseas).

19 Aug 52

Memorandum for Record from the Secretary of Defense

Record of discussion with the President on the principle and concept of future overseas deployment to 1 July 1954 of nuclear components of atomic weapons.

28 Aug 52

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Collins) subj: Overseas Storage of Atomic Weapons

Indicated relative importance and urgency involving overseas storage of atomic weapons.
Atomic Weapons

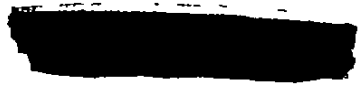
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10 Sep 52

Presidential Approval of an NBC Study

The President approved a study compiled by the Special Committee on Atomic Energy of the National Security Council. The study was entitled: "Agreed Concepts Regarding Atomic Weapons". It provided:

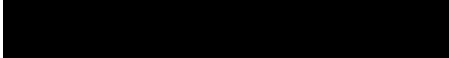
(1) The DoD should have custody of stocks of atomic weapons outside the continental limits of the U.S. and any such numbers within the continental limits as might be required to assure operational flexibility and military readiness.

(2) The AEC should maintain custody of the remainder of the stockpile.

(3) Other provisions relating to Provisions of Storage Facilities, Physical Security (DoD provided for all storage sites), Access to Weapons etc.

19 Sep 52

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, Defense, and Chairman, AEC subj: Transfer and Deployment of Non-Nuclear Components of Atomic Weapons

"The President has this date approved the recommended numbers of non-nuclear components, to be released progressively as facilities become available to Alaska, Hawaii, Guam,  and aircraft carriers."

~~GROUP 1
Excludes from automatic
downgrading and
declassification~~

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30 Sep 52
10 Oct 52

Staff Study dated 9/30/52 subj: Custody of Atomic Weapons with covering memorandum from the Chairman, MLC to the Secretary of Defense dated 10/10/52

24 Dec 52

Study Forwarded to the Secretary of Defense

This study is the staff study referenced to above entree dated 30 September 1952.

4 May 53

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, Defense and Chairman, AEC from the Ex/Secy, National Security Council subj: Custody of Atomic Weapons

Notifies addressees of meeting with President. Also attached are the statement by the Department of State and the Statement by the Acting Secretary of Defense.

8 May 53

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Transfer and Deployment of Atomic Weapons

"After consideration the JCS believe it is essential to operational readiness and military reflexibility that nuclear components be deployed outside the continental limits of the U.S. at the earliest practical date."

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downgrading and declassification

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SECTION 1.10 OF ENERGY ACT 1954

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8 Jun 53

Memorandum for Ex/Secy, National Security Council
from the Secretary of Defense (Wilson) subj:
Transfer and Deployment of Atomic Weapons

The JCS currently believe it essential to operational readiness and military flexibility that nuclear components be deployed outside the continental limits of the U.S. at the earliest practicable date.

I am in agreement with this view and request Presidential approval to effect deployment in numbers equal to the non-nuclear deployments now approved to those storages afloat and ashore wherein the decision to so deploy rests solely with the U.S.

20 Jun 53

President approved the Secretary of Defense request to effect deployment of nuclear components in numbers equal to the non-nuclear deployments now approved to those storages, afloat and ashore, wherein the decision to so deploy rests solely with the U.S.

22 Jun 53

President Authorized Deployment

Reference 29 April 1954 memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, AEC based on NEC Action of 19 June 1953. (See also 12 April 1954 memorandum for the Chairman, AEC from the Secretary of Defense subj: Release and Deployment of Nuclear Components.

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EXCEPT WHERE AUTHORIZED BY ENERGY ACT 1954

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22 Jun 53

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense and the
Chairman, AEC subj: Transfer and Deployment of
Atomic Weapons

"On the recommendation of the Special Committee of the National Security Council of Atomic Energy, as agreed at its meeting on 19 June 1953, the President, on 20 June 1953, approved the request of the Secretary of Defense, in the inclosure to the reference memorandum to effect deployment of nuclear components "in numbers equal to the non-nuclear deployments now approved to those storages afloat and ashore wherein the decision to so deploy rests solely with the U.S."

24 Jul 53

Memorandum for the Chairman, AEC from the Secretary of
Defense subj: Release and Deployment of Nuclear Components

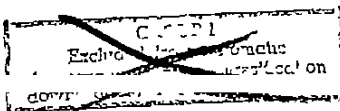
DoD is prepared to accept responsibility for security, storage and surveillance of nuclear components authorized by the President on 20 June 1953.

24 Jul 53

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the
Chairman, JCS subj: Initial Transfer and Deployment
of Atomic Weapons

Initial dispersal calls for _____ cores to be dispersed to _____ carriers, Atlantic carriers, and Pacific carriers.

18



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FOR U.S. DISSEMINATION
SECTION 144b, ATOMIC ENERGY ACT 1954

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25 Jul 53

First Nuclear Component Transferred from AEC to DoD other than Vanderberg transfer.

3 Aug 53

Supersedes Agreement Between AEC-DoD on Storage Site Operation and Maintenance, dated 3 August 1951.

16 Oct 53

Assistant Secretary of Defense Memoranda to the Army, Navy, Air Force and AFSWP

Delineated Service custody responsibilities, and responsibilities for operation of "operational sites" overseas and in the U.S. The memorandum to AFSWP charged the Chief, AFSWP with operating a reporting system to insure that he knew the status and location of the stockpile at all times.

25 Nov 53

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Storage of Atomic Weapons Overseas

It is recommended that the Secretary of Defense seek Presidential approval for the storage of nuclear and non-nuclear components of atomic weapons in [redacted] Western Germany, and the storage of nuclear components in the U.K. [redacted]

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FOREIGN DISSEMINATION
SECTION 144b, ATOMIC ENERGY ACT 1954

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downgrading and declassification~~

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[REDACTED]

23 Jan 54

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from ASD(ISA)
subj: Storage of Atomic Weapons

It notes that the JCS memorandum is dated 25 Nov 1953 which is shortly after approval of NSC 162/2 and before the NSC Special Committee on Atomic Matters and the President agreed on the interpretation of paragraph 39B NSC 162/2 and abolished the NSC Special Committee. We think paragraph 39B gives the basic authority to store overseas if Defense believes it is necessary, and to ask the Secretary of State to undertake the necessary negotiations without future referral to the NSC. (Notes Secretary Wilson discussed this matter with the President this afternoon).

3 Apr 54

Memorandum to the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman,
JCS subj: Initial Transfer and Deployment of Atomic Weapons

Reference is made to JCS memorandum 31 July 1952. The JCS have revised the deployment of nuclear components to storage locations having proper facilities to include [REDACTED] site became operational on or about 1 July 1954. Nuclear components to be deployed will be

22 Apr 54

Memorandum for Record from Col Williams OATSD(AE) subj:
Deployment of Complete Atomic Weapons to Foreign Countries

Refers to a memorandum from ASD(ISA) to JCS and a memorandum to the Secretary of State. These memoranda

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declassification

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC
DOWNGRADING AND
DECLASSIFICATION
SECTION 144b, ATOMIC ENERGY ACT 1954

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[REDACTED]

22 Apr 54
(Cont'd)

concern deployment of complete atomic weapons to the U.K. [REDACTED] and requests State Department arrange necessary authority for storage of complete weapons in Western Germany [REDACTED]

3 May 54

Memorandum for the JCS from the Secretary of Defense (Wilson) subj: Existing Rights for Atomic Weapons [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has granted the U.S. the right to store complete atomic weapons [REDACTED]

3 May 54

Memorandum for the JCS from the Secretary of Defense (Wilson) subj: Existing Rights of Atomic Weapons in the U.K.

The U.K. has accepted the introduction of complete atomic weapons by the U.S. into the U.K. This memorandum gives brief history of U.K. approval.

6 May 54

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Storage of Atomic Weapons Overseas

Instructions were issued 5 May 1954 to have _____ cores moved without delay from storage aboard a U.S. naval vessel [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

19 May 54

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Deployment of Guided Missile Atomic Warheads on Naval Ships

~~GROUP 1~~
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downgrading and declassification

Warheads on Naval Ships 21

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19 May 54
(Cont'd)

Recommends the deployment of nuclear and non-nuclear components for Regulus on board four cruiser and two submarines.

16 Jun 54

Entitled, "Agreement of Atomic Weapons for Maneuver Use"
Agreement signed by the Chairman, AEC and the Chairman, MLC relating to the maneuver use of atomic weapons by the DoD.

23 Jun 54

Memorandum to the JCS from the Secretary of Defense (Wilson) subj: Storage of Atomic Weapons Overseas

This represents a reply to the JCS memorandum of 25 Nov 1953. Authorizes the JCS to deploy and store nuclear and non-nuclear components in Western Germany. It authorizes the JCS to deploy non-nuclears [redacted]



26 Jul 54

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Storage of Atomic Weapons Overseas

The JCS recommends the immediate deployment of nuclear components to the U.K. [redacted] Also requests dispersal of additional non-nuclears to the U.K. Gives justification.

9 Sep 54

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Storage Dispersal of Atomic Weapons on Operational Bases in the Zone of Interior.

The JCS recommends approval of the principle of ZI on base storage and requests the AEC be informed of the same Bases in the Zone of Interior.

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9 Sep 54
(Cont'd)

of the program.


5 Oct 54

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Secretary of Defense

Outlines scope of on base storage of the ZI.

29 Oct 54

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the
Chairman, JCS subj: Deployment of Atomic Weapons Components

Reference is made to the Secretary of Defense memorandum of 23 June 1954. The JCS have determined the following deployment of nuclear and non-nuclear components to West Germany, U.K.  (A shipping date of 1 Dec 1954 was established by memorandum from General Loper to ASD(ISA), dated 5 Nov 1954, however for political reasons shipping to West Germany was delayed until 1 March 1955).

1 Dec 54

Letter to the President from the Secretary of Defense

The President concurrence is requested on the concept of overseas deployment and on base dispersal. Also the President is requested to authorize the transfer to the DoD on call and subject to appropriate arrangements to types and sufficient numbers of atomic weapons to meet the 1 July 1955 schedule for overseas deployment and on base storage.

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1 Dec 54

Memorandum for Record by General Loper subj: Meeting with the President, 0900, 12/1/54 on the Deployment and Dispersal of Atomic Weapons

The President approved the dispersal plan set forth in the Secretary of Defense letter of this date.

1 Dec 54

Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the President

States the official approval of the general dispersal and deployment plan presented by the Secretary of Defense.

6 Dec 54

Memorandum for the Chairman, JCS from the Secretary of Defense (Wilson) subj: Dispersal of Nuclear Weapons

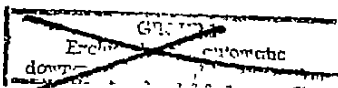
Notifies JCS that the President has determined in the interest of national defense, atomic weapons including TN weapons will be dispersed overseas and within the CONUS to the extent required by military readiness. Custody will be transferred to the DoD. Authorization meets the 1 July 1955 schedule for deployment and on-base storage.

15 Dec 54

Information Item for MLC

Chronology of pertinent correspondence on the subject of deployment and dispersal of atomic weapons for the period July - December 1954.

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16 Dec 54

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the ATSD(AE)

Reports status of the locations of thermo-nuclear weapons with respect to SAC bases.

27 Jan 55

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the ATSD(AE)

Gives off-continent deployment of atomic weapons.

2 Feb 55

Letter to the Chairman, JCAE from ATSD(AE)

A brief summary of an oral report to the JCAE on 25 January 1955 relating to the Departments program for on-base storage and deployment of atomic weapons.

9 Apr 55

Record of Executive Session of the JCAE

Contains General Loper's brief on the current status of dispersal of atomic weapons both within the U.S. and abroad.

30 Jun 55

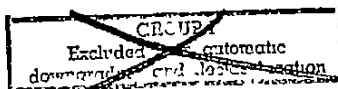
Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Dispersal of Atomic Weapons

Forwards a recommended dispersal schedule and outlines the principle of allocation to commands rather than geographical locations as heretofore.

30 Jul 55

Letter to the President from the Secretary of Defense

Letter gives report of the dispersal program. To date, no TN weapons have been transferred to the department for storage at SAC bases in the U.S. or overseas. Requests approval to disperse TN weapons and that AEC be directed to transfer a total of _____



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30 Jul 55
(Cont'd)

nuclear and _____ non-nuclears by 1 July 1956.

(Note: This includes TN weapons).

9 Aug 55

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the
Chairman, JCS subj: Dispersal of Atomic Weapons

The table below was the commands estimate for atomic weapons as of 1 July 1956. The command and geographical locations are given.

23 Aug 55

Memorandum for Record by General Luedecke

This memorandum covers a meeting with the President on 1 August and 23 August on the subject of dispersal of atomic weapons.

24 Aug 55

General Luedecke scheduled to appear before JCAE on storage and dispersal in Europe.

29 Aug 55

Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the President

"I approve the general dispersal plan set forth in your letter and subsequent presentation." "The AEC should retain custody of dispersed weapons having a yield of excess of 600 KT's."

29 Aug 55

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the President

I have determined that in the interest of national defense the program of dispersal of atomic weapons to overseas areas and within the Continental U.S. which I

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29 Aug 55
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approved on December 1, 1954, should be continued to the extent required by military readiness. I have concluded, however, that in the execution of this program, the AEC should retain custody of dispersed weapons having a yield in excess of 600 KT's. In so doing, the system whereby the AEC retains custody of dispersed weapons will be in consonance with the objective of immediate readiness for use.

6 Sep 55

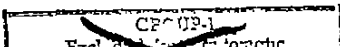
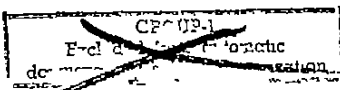
Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, AEC

Forwards "Interim Principles and Procedures for the Carrying Out of Responsibilities as Directed by the President in Connection with the Early Dispersal of High Yield Weapons".

20 Sep 55

JCS Staff Memorandum subj: Dispersal of Atomic Weapons

In accordance with Presidential authorization for dispersal of atomic weapons, transmitted by the Secretary of Defense in his memorandum of 31 Aug 1955, you are authorized to disperse atomic weapons and weapon components in conformance with the schedules in Appendix "A" hereto. (Note: Appendix "B" is entitled, "Principles Governing Dispersal of Atomic Weapons").



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24 Feb 56

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the
Chairman, JCS subj: Dispersal of Atomic Weapons

The JCS are of the opinion that the first high yield weapons should be under military control. If it is not appropriate to reopen that matter at this time, changes are required in the interim agreement. The changes are attached.

5 Mar 56

Aide Memoire for the Secretary of Defense subj: Notes
on New Authorization for Dispersal of Weapons through
June 1956, Prepared by General Loper

8 Mar 56

Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the President

This letter amends the Presidential Directive of 29 August 1955.

4 Apr 56

Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the President

"I hereby direct that the following procedures will govern the transfer of weapons and custody from the AEC to the DoD." This transfer procedure was to be followed in an event of emergency and was implemented by a joint AEC-DoD Memorandum of Understanding dated 4 May 1956.

20 Apr 56

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Secretary of Defense

Forwarded the view of the JCS and recommends a modification of the interim agreement on the dual custodial arrangement. (Includes 4/12/56 Covering Brief).

4 May 56

AEC-DoD Memorandum of Understanding for the Transfer of
Atomic Weapons

An agreement regarding the automatic release and transfer of AEC weapons to the DoD in case of a defense emergency.

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4 Jun 56

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Secretary of Defense

Defense Secretary signed the AEC-DoD agreement as to principle and procedures for carrying out responsibilities in connection with dispersal of high yield weapons. This agreement replaced the interim agreement of 6 September 1955 *(Includes 6/1/56 Covering Brief).

4 Jun 56

AEC-DoD Agreement as to Principles and Procedures for the Carrying Out of Responsibilities as Directed by the President in Connection with the Early Dispersal of High Yield Weapons

Signed by the Chairman, AEC and the Secretary of Defense. This Agreement supersedes Agreement, same subject, dated 6 Sep 1955. (Note: Paragraph 3 of this Agreement establishes the designated military representatives of the AEC in the case of actual transport or military vehicle including ships or aircraft and when dispersed combatant or ammunition ships.

3 Jul 56

Letter to the Secretary of State from the ASD(ISA)

The JCS have now advised that the first shipment of special weapons has been planned to arrive in Italy on or about 25 July 1956.

20 Jul 56

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from ATSD(AE)
subj: Revised AEC-DoD Agreement on Custody of High Yield Weapons

A short summary on the subject.

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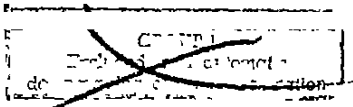
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A short summary on the subject.

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- 16 Aug 56 Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Secretary of Defense
Notifies AEC of President's approval of the new agreement of custody of high yield weapons. (Includes 8/13/56 Covering Brief).
- 19 Oct 56 Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS, subj: Dispersal Requirements for Atomic Weapons
Recommends a basis for requesting Presidential authorization for transfer and dispersal of atomic weapons through FY 1957.
- 19 Nov 56 Paper entitled, "Political Status as Regards Dispersal of Atomic Weapons"
Political status is given for specific locations.
- 21 Nov 56 Letter to the President from the Secretary of Defense
Recommended dispersals through 1 July 1957.
- 24 Nov 56 Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the President
Notification of approval of the transfer to the DoD sufficient numbers of atomic weapons to provide DoD custody as of 1 July 1957.
- 24 Dec 56 Letter from President authorizing comp. DoD Custody

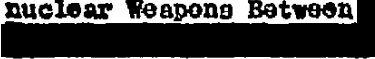


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4 Dec 56

Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the Secretary of the Navy subj: Discrepancy in Transfer of Thermonuclear Weapons Between



19 Dec 56

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)

 Informs the AEC of unauthorized occurrence involving transfer of high yield weapons and corrective action being taken. (Includes 12/17/56 Covering Brief).

2 Feb 57

AEC-DoD Agreement for the Dispersal of High Yield Weapons

 (Note: This Agreement supersedes "Principle and Procedures for the Carrying Out of Responsibilities as Directed by the President in Connection with the Dispersal of High Yield Weapons", dated 4 June 1956).

3 Jul 57

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Dispersal Requirements for Atomic Weapons

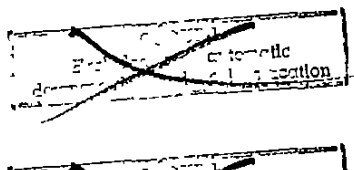
 Forwards dispersal requirements through 30 July 1958.

5 Aug 57

Letter to the President from the Deputy Secretary of Defense

 Requests approval of the DoD dispersal through 1 July 1958.

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6 Aug 57

Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the President

The President approved the Secretary of Defense requests as of 5 August 1957.

2 May 58

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Deputy Secretary of Defense

The letter expresses concern over the present custodial arrangements concerning dispersed weapons of yields of 600 KT's or over. Two solutions are proposed to the AEC. (Includes 5/1/58 Covering Brief).

22 Sep 58

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, JCS subj: Dispersal Requirements for Atomic Weapons

Letter requests approval of dispersal requirements and DoD custody for all dispersed atomic weapons through 30 June 1959.

13 Oct 58

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from the Acting Secretary of Defense

This letter requests coordination on the dispersal requirements through 30 June 1959.

21 Oct 58

Letter to the Secretary of Defense from the Chairman, AEC

The AEC presented specific comments on the proposed letter to the President concerning the subject of DoD custody of all dispersed weapons.

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letter to the President concerning the subject of DoD
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23 Oct 58 Analysis of AEC comments on Dispersal as proposed by Mr. Quarles' letter to Mr. McCone of 13 October 1958

20 Nov 58 Letter to the President from the Deputy Secretary of Defense

Requests approval of dispersals plan as of 1 July 1959. In addition the letter requests authority for the DoD to assume custodial responsibilities for all dispersed weapons including those over 600 KT's. (Includes 11/20/58 Covering Brief).

26 Nov 58 Annex 1 to the 2 February Agreement on High Yield Custody

AEC concurred but Agreement was never consummated.

2 Dec 58 Memorandum for the ATSD(AE) from the Chief, AFSWP subj: Dispersal of High Yield Weapons

Forwards Annex 1 to the AEC-DoD Agreement for Dispersal of High Yield Weapons, dated 2 February 1957.

19 Dec 58 Aide Memoire for the Secretary of Defense

To use in briefing the President at a meeting this date.

24 Dec 58 Letter to the ATSD(AE) from the General Manager, AEC

Forwards Annex 1 to AEC-DoD Agreement for the Dispersal of High Yield Weapons dated 2 February 1957.

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CUSTODY OF ATOMIC WEAPONS
Historical Summary of Principle Actions (U)

24 JULY 1968

DATE

SUMMARY

1946

Atomic Energy Act of 1946

Assigned all organizations and properties of the Manhattan Project to the AEC.

30 Dec 46

Letter to the Chairman, AEC from Secretary of War

In connection with discussion concerning storage bases the letter states in part, "I anticipate that when the matter has been reviewed by the President, he will direct that a certain number of bombs and bomb parts be turned over to the armed services and that these bombs and bomb parts will be wholly within the custody of the armed services which are charged with the national defense".

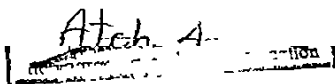
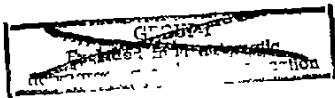
31 Dec 46

Executive Order 9816

Implemented the Atomic Energy Act of 1946. It stated that all fissionable material and all atomic weapons and parts remaining from the Manhattan Project would be transferred to the AEC. It further provided that AEC would deliver fissionable material or weapons to the Armed Forces in the interest of National Defense. (See Sec. 1, 2(c), and 4(e) and Sec. 6(a) of the Atomic Energy Act.

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