

Notes of Meeting of the Interim Committee, May 18, 1945,
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Notes of an Informal Meeting
of the
Interim Committee
Friday, May 18, 1945, 2:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.

PRESENT:

MEMBERS

Hon. Ralph A. Bard
Hon. James F. Byrnes
Hon. William L. Clayton
Dr. James B. Conant
Mr. George L. Harrison, Acting Chairman

BY INVITATION

Mr. Arthur Page
Maj. Gen. Leslie R. Groves

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To
By authority of: *SEC. ARMY*

BY THE per 710554

Date *9/29/71 WHC - NARS*

I. MEETINGS WITH THE PANELS.

It was agreed that the Scientific Panel should be invited to meet with the Committee on Thursday, May 31, and, if possible, the Military Panel and representatives of industry should be brought in for discussions the same weekend. It was suggested that, in addition to inviting Mr. Rafferty of Union Carbide and Mr. Chapman of Eastman Kodak to discuss with the Committee the industrial aspects of the problem, Mr. Carpenter of du Pont might be invited to discuss the problems faced by du Pont in gearing its operations to the project.

II. DRAFT PUBLIC RELEASES.

The Committee considered the draft statements which had been prepared by Mr. Laurence. With respect to the type of

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release that might be made by the Commanding Officer, Almagordo Air Base, when the test is run, the Committee was in general agreement on the content of Forms A and B. Forms C and D were considered undesirable because of the mention therein of experimentation on new weapons.

The consensus of the Committee relative to the proposed statement to be made by the President after a successful test was that the President should make only a short announcement over the radio, or possibly to the Congress, concerning the general nature of the weapon and its military and international implications. This announcement should be followed by a more complete press release containing a history of the program, a discussion of the technical phases of the project, some indication of our cooperation with the British, and of the intention to take the necessary legislative steps to secure adequate control. It was contemplated that other releases dealing with further details of the program would be issued following these original announcements.

It was agreed that Mr. Page and Mr. Laurence should rework the draft releases along the general lines indicated, bearing in mind that the nature of the statements would depend in large measure on the results of the test and of actual use, and that changes might later be necessary in terms of the international situation existing at the time of release.

III. BUSH-CONANT MEMORANDUM.

In discussing the points made in the Bush-Conant memorandum, the question was raised concerning our obligations under the Quebec Agreement. This Agreement required that the weapon cannot be used against a third country by one signatory without the agreement of the other. Accordingly, before the United States can use the weapon against any country, it must secure the consent of the United Kingdom. However, it was pointed out that no prior consent is involved in conducting local tests.

The Acting Chairman reported that the British are considering the establishment of a committee similar to the Interim Committee for the purpose of studying problems of publicity and domestic controls. It is likely that in the near future the British group will wish to get in touch with the Interim Committee to coordinate parallel action; however, it was the thought of the Acting Chairman — and his view was concurred in by the Committee — that it would be unwise to arrange for any interchange at this time.

IV. NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 31, 1945, at 11:00 A.M. in the Office of the Secretary of War.

R. Gordon Arneson
R. GORDON ARNESON
2nd Lieutenant, AUS
Secretary