

NOTES OF THE INTERIM COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY 6 JULY 1945

9:30 A. M. - 12:45 P. M.

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee

Dr. Vannevar Bush
Dr. Karl T. Compton
Dr. James B. Conant
Mr. George L. Harrison, Acting Chairman

By Invitation

Maj. Gen. Leslie R. Groves

I. SWEDISH DEPOSITS OF URANIUM:

A memorandum prepared by the British dealing with the situation arising from the discovery of large deposits of uranium in Sweden was read by the Committee members. Mr. Harrison explained that the Combined Policy Committee at its 4 July meeting had voted unanimously that prompt action should be taken to enter into a political agreement with the Swedish Government with the object of securing the fullest possible control over the deposits in Sweden. Mr. Harrison reported further that the Secretary of State, on being informed of this situation, favored prompt action along the lines of a political agreement and stated to Mr. Harrison that the resources of the State Department were available to that end, and that he hoped action could be initiated at once.

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II. DRAFT STATEMENTS OF PUBLICITY:

With regard to the draft Presidential statement the British suggestions were accepted by the Committee in toto.

Mr. Harrison reported that the British manifested some concern about mentioning in the draft statement of the Secretary of War the various processes employed and the fact that all of the several processes had proven successful. In view of this objection the Committee agreed that specific reference to processes should be omitted but felt that there was no point in avoiding reference to the fact that several processes were being successfully employed, for this would be realized by any competent physicist as soon as the use of the bomb was made public. It was reported that the British felt that the Section I dealing with a resume of scientific discoveries leading to the development of the bomb was misleading because it was incomplete. In view of this, the Committee agreed that this Section should be abbreviated so as to make only very general reference to the universality of knowledge in the field of nuclear physics before the war without making any mention of the contributions of particular scientists.

With regard to the scientific statement now in process of clearance with the scientists of the project, Dr. Bush reported that at the 4 July CPC meeting he had argued strongly that no useful purpose would be served by withholding from the public the general scientific history of the project. At Dr. Bush's suggestion, the

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Combined Policy Committee had agreed (1) that it should approve a set of principles and conditions governing the release of information on this subject and (2) that the scientific release should be prepared in line with these principles, with Sir James Chadwick being authorized to clear the statement on behalf of the British.

III. DR. UREY:

As a matter of information, Mr. Harrison read his letter of 27 June to Dr. A. H. Compton which stated that the Interim Committee felt it could not enlarge the Scientific Panel at this time, but that the Scientific Panel should obtain from Dr. Urey and others such views on any phase of the project as they might care to express, and that the Panel should decide whether such views as are obtained should be passed on to the Committee for consideration.

IV. THE BIG THREE CONFERENCE:

Mr. Harrison reported that the position taken by the Committee at its last meeting concerning discussion of this subject at the "Big Three" Conference had been communicated to the Secretary of War, and that the Secretary was in complete agreement with the Committee's recommendation, particularly in view of the short time between the Conference and the actual use of the weapon. The Secretary of War had strongly endorsed the recommendation in speaking to the President about it.

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V. LEGISLATION:

After considerable discussion of legislation to establish a post-war Control Commission, it was evident that there were many unsolved problems which would have to be given careful consideration, particularly as regards the relationship of such a Commission to the organization for general research proposed in Dr. Bush's forthcoming report to the President. Mr. Harrison reported that in their thinking thus far General Royall and Mr. Marbury tended to favor a proprietary status for the Commission inasmuch as this status would provide greater power and freedom of action. Mr. Harrison expressed the view that the present organization, namely the Manhattan District, should be kept in being until the new organization established by law could begin to function. The first emphasis should be to get the Commission established with full constitutional power to act and then take up the details of internal organization and the question of relationships with the proposed general research agency.

The Committee agreed that Dr. Bush, with the assistance of Dr. Conant, should draw up a set of principles which should be furnished to General Royall and Mr. Marbury as a guide in drafting legislation.

VI. NEXT MEETING:

Since it was felt that the time of the next meeting would be dependent upon the date of the test, it was agreed that the next

meeting should take place sometime between the 18th and 21st of July, at which time the Committee would consider a report from the sub-committee on legislation.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 P. M.

R. Gordon Arneson

R. GORDON ARNESON
1st Lieutenant, A.U.S.
Secretary.