

72328

URGENT

MESSAGE FOR LEWIS L. STRAUSS, CHAIRMAN, AEC
FROM K. D. NICHOLS, GENERAL MANAGER.

US DOE ARCHIVES	
16 US ATOMIC ENERGY	
RG	COMMISSION
Collection	SECRETARIAT
Box	4929
Folder	MR&A 7 Castle 104.3

YOUR COMMENTS WOULD BE APPRECIATED CONCERNING ANY ADVICE TO PASS ON TO THE PRESIDENT TO SAY AT HIS PRESS-CONFERENCE ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, IN VIEW OF THE NEWS DISPATCHES WHICH ARE QUOTED IN THE BALANCE OF THIS MESSAGE. START OF QUOTATIONS: REP. DURHAM (D-NC), RANKING DEMOCRAT ON THE CONGRESSIONAL ATOMIC COMMITTEE, SAID TODAY THE UNITED STATES QUOTE EXPLODED THIS MONTH QUOTE A THERMONUCLEAR WEAPON MANY TIMES MORE POWERFUL THAN THE EXPLOSION TEST OF NOVEMBER 1, 1952.

THAT 1952 EXPLOSION ITSELF WAS QUOTE A SUCCESS QUOTE DURHAM TOLD A REPORTER. QUOTE THIS MORE RECENT ONE IS JUST MUCH GREATER QUOTE.

REP. W. STERLING COLE (R-NY), CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE-HOUSE ATOMIC GROUP, HAD ANNOUNCED LAST NIGHT (ON A TELEVISION PROGRAM) THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS THE HYDROGEN BOMB--THERMONUCLEAR IS THE SCIENTIFIC ADJECTIVE FOR THIS NEW WEAPON--AND CAN DELIVER IT ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

COLE ALSO SAID IT IS A FAIR ASSUMPTION THAT RUSSIA, TOO, HAS THE H-BOMB.

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER WAS ASKED TODAY AT HIS NEWS CONFERENCE ABOUT COLE'S STATEMENT AND SAID HE WASN'T PREPARED TO DISCUSS IT. HE SAID HE HAD NOT SEEN IT AND COULD NOT RECALL EXACTLY WHAT HAD BEEN SAID PREVIOUSLY IN THIS CONNECTION. HE SAID HE WOULD LOOK THE MATTER UP AND REPLY AT NEXT WEEK'S NEWS CONFERENCE.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/OC

Civilian 4/12/84

REVIEWED BY

DATE

KPS 7/9/85

FISHERMAN ADDED HE WOULDN'T SAY ANYTHING NEXT WEEK THAT WENT BEYOND WHAT
ALREADY HAS BEEN SAID IN OFFICIAL STATEMENTS.

REP. DURHAM TOOK THE STAND THAT THE NEW BOMB QUOTE IS SUCH A HORRIBLE
THING, IT'S BEST TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT IT QUOTE. HE ADDED QUOTE
THE PEOPLE OF THE ENTIRE WORLD SHOULD BE TOLD QUICKLY THE EXTENT OF PROPERTY
DAMAGE AND DAMAGE TO LIFE THAT CAN NOW BE EXPECTED FROM THIS TYPE OF WEAPON
QUOTE.

DURHAM SAID THE EXPLOSION THIS MONTH WAS IN THE TESTING GROUNDS OF THE PACIFIC
OCEAN.

WHILE DURHAM WENT ON THE RECORD, EVEN HIGHER ESTIMATES OF DESTRUCTIVE POWER
WERE ASSIGNED TO THE NEW EXPLOSION BY OTHERS IN A POSITION TO KNOW, BUT WHO
ASKED NOT TO BE QUOTED BY NAME.

THESE SOURCES SAID A QUOTE WARM UP QUOTE EXPLOSION OF A HYDROGEN DEVICE
IN THE PACIFIC MARCH 1 SURPRISED AMERICAN SCIENTISTS WITH A BLAST AT LEAST
600 TIMES MORE POWERFUL THAN THE HIROSHIMA ATOMIC BOMB. THEY SAID IT WAS
THREE OR FOUR TIMES STRONGER THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED.

THE HIROSHIMA BOMB, ~~77,000 TONS OF TNT~~, WAS MEASURED AT 20,000
TONS OF TNT. THE MARCH 1 HYDROGEN EXPLOSION WAS MEASURED AT BETWEEN 12 AND
14 MILLION TONS OF TNT, IT WAS SAID. THESE SOURCES ALSO SAID IT WAS FIVE
TIMES GREATER THAN THE MEASURED FORCE OF WHAT WAS BELIEVED TO BE THE FIRST
H-BOMB TEST, NOV. 1, 1952. OTHER COMPARISONS WITH THE 1952 TESTS VARIED.

CONFIDENTIAL

Department of Energy
Historian's Office
ARCHIVES

THOSE WHO REPORTED THE 600-TIMES-HIROSHIMA EFFECT, ALSO SAID OF THE MARCH 1 BLAST:

THE BLAST WAS SET OFF FROM A 150-FOOT TOWER AND SHOT A NUCLEAR CLOUD MORE THAN 17 MILES INTO THE AIR.

THE SHOCK WAS FELT AT KWAJALEIN ISLAND, 176 MILES AWAY.

THERE WAS A FALL-OUT OF NUCLEAR DUST ON AN INHABITED ISLAND 330 MILES AWAY, BUT IN HARMLESS QUANTITIES AT THAT DISTANCE.

AND, IT WAS ADDED, SCIENTISTS NOW BELIEVE THEY CAN BUILD HYDROGEN WEAPONS WITH AN EXPLOSIVE POWER OF 100 MILLION TONS OF TNT, AS COMPARED WITH THE 12-14 MILLION ESTIMATE GIVEN FOR THE MARCH 1 BLAST.

CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES REPORTED THE RECENT HYDROGEN BLAST AT BIKINI LOOSED ENERGY EQUAL TO MORE THAN 12,000,000 TONS OF TNT-600 TIMES THE DESTRUCTIVE CAPACITY OF THE A-BOMBS THAT WRECKED NAGASAKI AND HIROSHIMA.

THE EXPLOSION, TOUCHED OFF MARCH 1, WAS FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN ANTICIPATED, THESE SOURCES SAID. THE SHOCK WAS FELT AS FAR AWAY AS KWAJALEIN, 176 MILES FROM THE TEST SITE.

AS DESTRUCTIVE AS WAS THIS TEST, THE FIRST OF A SERIES, OTHERS ARE PLANNED THAT WILL BE EVEN MORE POWERFUL, THE SOURCES REPORTED. ONE BLAST SET NOW FOR THE LATTER HALF OF APRIL MAY RUN AS HIGH AS 15,000,000 TO 50,000,000 TONS, THE SOURCES SAID.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Department of Energy
Atomic Energy

THE REPORTS CAME IN THE WAKE OF OFFICIAL DISCLOSURE THAT THIS COUNTRY NOW HAS A DELIVERABLE HYDROGEN BOMB AND THE PLANES TO CARRY IT TO ANY TARGET IN THE WORLD. AN UNOFFICIAL SOURCE ADDED THAT CRUDE BUT USABLE H-BOMBS ALREADY ARE BEING STOCKPILED.

ACCORDING TO THE CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES THE TEST AT BIKINI DID NOT INVOLVE AN H-BOMB AS SUCH BUT RATHER A HYDROGEN QUOTE DEVICE QUOTE. ESTIMATES OF ITS DESTRUCTIVE POWER WERE PUT AT FROM 12,000,000 to 14,000,000 TONS OF TNT.

THIS WOULD MAKE IT MORE THAN TWICE THE POWER OF THE WORLD'S FIRST HYDROGEN EXPLOSION, SET OFF BY THIS COUNTRY AT ENIWETOK NOV. 1, 1952. THIS FIRST BLAST HAS BEEN ESTIMATED UNOFFICIALLY AT AROUND 5,000,000 TONS TNT EQUIVALENT.

END MESSAGE

CONFIDENTIAL

Historian's Office
ARCHIVES