



January 11, 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL CUTLER

SUBJECT: ECDA Proposal for Open Shot Program in Conjunction
with Continental Test Series (Spring, 1955).

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The attached paper contains an ECDA proposal to AEC that an open shot program be conducted in conjunction with the Continental Test Series this Spring, with participation by Federal, State and local civil defense personnel, and observed by information media representatives.

ECDA surveys indicate that the American public needs additional information concerning (a) damage effects of atomic weapons and the chances of personal survival, (b) the hazards of radiation, and (c) the practicability of personal protection and shelter. Large gaps and misconceptions exist in the public understanding of the force and effect of the atomic bomb.

The proposed exercise would provide the following:

- (1) An opportunity for civil defense personnel and representatives of the public to witness an atomic explosion and obtain accurate, on-the-scene knowledge as to the effects.
- (2) A practical demonstration relating to some aspects of civil defense, thereby stimulating greater public interest in civil defense.
- (3) Indoctrination of State and city civil defense personnel, and other officials charged with civil defense responsibilities, resulting in better informed leadership in their home States and communities.

It is the position of ECDA that the indoctrination of key civil defense leaders, who form the cadre of our national civil defense organization, is no less important than the indoctrination of professionals responsible for the military defense of our country.

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Comment:

The ECDA proposal is eminently sound, and merits favorable consideration and support.

A program of this sort is a step in the right direction toward the necessary education of the public with respect to the magnitude of the destructive effects of atomic weapons, and is consistent with approved policy set forth in NSC 5408.

J. Patrick Coyne

cc: Mr. Lay ✓