

## Briefing Paper for President's Press Conference

December 2, 1959

GENEVA CONFERENCE  
ON THE DISCONTINUANCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTSQUESTION:

Mr. President, the technical discussions have been underway in Geneva for approximately one week. Could you tell us how they are going and what we hope these discussions will accomplish?

ANSWER:

As you know, these technical discussions are being carried out in private and therefore, I do not wish to comment on how they are going, except to say, that both sides have seemed to settle down quickly to the task before them.

Now as to what the technical discussions will accomplish, it is hoped that the discussions and conclusions of these talks will offer a firm, up-to-date, scientific basis for an agreement on a test cessation--an agreement that we certainly, earnestly seek.



I just want to add that we are indeed fortunate to once again have Dr. James Fisk leading our scientific delegation in these discussions.

QUESTION:

Mr. President, the Antarctica treaty, which was signed the other day, stipulates that until a general international agreement on nuclear explosions is reached, such explosions will be prohibited in Antarctica. Could you tell us what bearing this might have on the current test ban negotiations in Geneva?

ANSWER:

This provision of the treaty concerns the detonations of nuclear devices for peaceful purposes since the testing of weapons of all kind is elsewhere prohibited in the treaty. The United States has tabled an article for peaceful detonations in the Geneva negotiations. We envisage that rules for such detonations would form a part of a treaty for the discontinuance of weapons tests. It is such rules which would, with the consent of the parties concerned, become operative in Antarctica.

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QUESTION:

Mr. President, is the United States now prepared to extend its test ban moratorium beyond the December 31 deadline?

ANSWER:

No decision has been reached on the matter. Obviously much will depend upon the progress made at the Geneva test ban negotiations between now and the end of the year.

