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 FOLDER MRA 7 Hardtack, v1

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119th AEC-MLC Conference 9-26-57 Operation HARDTACK

Mr. Fields said that a searching review of test requirements

for HARDTACK is in progress within the AEC and that the Commission will have a briefing on this subject by the weapons laboratories on October 22. He referred to the President's instructions that

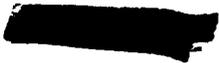
the number of shots in the Operation be reduced to the essential minimum and said it would be desirable that the Commission meet with DOD representatives soon thereafter so that an essential program may be jointly agreed upon. He suggested that this might be combined with the next AEC-MLC conference scheduled for October 24.

General Loper commented that the President's instructions to reduce the HARDTACK program to the minimum essential tests have been communicated by the Secretary of Defense to the Military Services and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He added that instructions to the same effect had been issued previously by the Secretary of Defense and that the President's instructions did not change DOD intentions to reduce requirements to the absolute minimum. General Loper added that in determining its minimum requirements the DOD must consider the possibility that HARDTACK might be the last opportunity for large-scale testing.

Mr. Libby observed that although the Commission may not have considered the recommendations resulting from the laboratory briefing on October 22, a discussion of the HARDTACK program at the next AEC-MLC Conference will nevertheless be desirable. He added that in his opinion, off-site fallout should be held to about 6 megatons of fission equivalent.

General Starbird noted that the MLC plans to visit the Los Alamos and Livermore laboratories during the week of October 6, a few days after the PLUMBBOB series will have been concluded. He cautioned that before this visit the Division of Military Application and the laboratories will not have had an opportunity to consolidate the PLUMBBOB results in terms of how AEC can best

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meet DOD requirements and what tests will be required in HARDTACK. General Starbird observed that the laboratories are interested in testing many weapons in HARDTACK but that he did not believe it would be possible to obtain Presidential approval and the necessary funds for all these tests.

General Starbird advised that the Operations Coordinating Board have requested through the DOD that publicity on weapons development and testing be reduced in view of current United Nations disarmament discussions. He said that necessary AEC releases will be simple, not suggestive of plans for future testing, and not of a nature that will arouse public attention.

General Starbird announced a meeting between AEC and JTF-7 representatives during the week of September 30 for the purpose of discussing in general terms the invitation of foreign observers to witness HARDTACK tests, in accordance with the President's announcement on July 3, 1957.

With reference to General Loper's statement that HARDTACK might be the last opportunity for large-scale testing, Admiral Patrick commented that it should be remembered that in the future the Pacific Proving Grounds may be required for the testing of small clean weapons.

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