THE DIPLOMACY OF THE TEST BAN TREATY
THE U. S. POSITION

by 1264

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

FIRST ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL ATOMIC ENERGY

When Professor J. Robert Oppenheimer of the University of California and his associates gathered at Los Alamos, New Mexico, in March of 1943, few knew that their job was to design, assemble, and test an atomic bomb. The destructive power of this bomb was not general knowledge until the United States became the first nation to use it against Japan by dropping one on Hiroshima, an important Japanese base on Honshu Island, on August 6, 1945. This bomb, developed at Los Alamos, was more than 12,000 times as powerful as the best improvement on TNT. One hundred and twenty-three of these bombs would have contained as much destructive power as all of the 2,435,595 tons of bombs dropped by the Allies on Europe during World War II.[1] Whether or not this destruction was necessary to bring the Japanese to an early surrender has been debated many times, but the horror of this weapon was obvious to anyone who knew anything about Hiroshima.

The reactions of other nations, after Hiroshima, ranged from Winston Churchill's hope, "that these awful agencies will be made to conduce to peace among the nations, and that instead of wrecking measureless havoc upon the entire globe they may become a perennial fountain of world

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[1] "Atomic Age," Time, vol. 46, Aug. 20, 1945, p. 32.

prosperity,"[2] to the Swedish harsh criticism of the act. The Swedes did not accept the American justification of the act as the British had. The United States reasoned that the bomb would shorten the war and thereby save the lives of untold thousands of American and Allied soldiers, who otherwise would have been killed in battle.[3] On August 9, the liberal evening newspaper of Stockholm, the Aftonbladet, stated in a leading article, "It is all very well if atom raids can shorten the war, but this experiment with the population of an entire city as a guinea-pig reflects no martial glory on its authors. The professors who thought out the whole theory can hardly feel any joy over the first application of their discovery."[4]

After the destructive powers of the bomb had been realized, many wondered if the scientists who helped in developing it felt a sense of guilt. Dr. Harold C. Urey, a Nobel Prize Winner whose research helped pioneer the atomic age, spoke for many scientists when he answered this question of guilt by saying, "Atomic energy is in nature. It can't be concealed. Scientists can't prevent modern war by refusing to do scientific work. The solution is political."[5]

Nevertheless, it had to be recognized that as people became better

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[2]The Times (London), August 20, 1945, p. 29.

[3]U.S., Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Military Affairs, Hearings, An Act for the Development and Control of Atomic Energy, 79th Congress, 1st Session, 1945, p. 1.

[4]The Times (London), August 10, 1945, p. 4.

[5]"Interview with Professor Harold C. Urey," New Yorker, vol. 21, Dec. 15, 1945, p. 24.

informed about the potential of atomic weapons, there was the possibility of a reaction against science. As J. Robert Oppenheimer stated:

> Whatever the individual motivation and belief of the scientist, without the recognition from his fellowmen of the value of his work, in the long term science will perish. I do not believe that it will be possible to transcend the present crisis, in a world in which the works of science are being used, and are being knowingly used, for ends men hold evil; in such a world it will be of little help to try to protect the scientist from restraints from controls, from an imposed secrecy, which he rightly finds incompatable with all he has learned to believe and cherish.[6]

The only redemption from this dilemma, Oppenheimer believed, was for scientists to recognize the threat of this new power and then to do all in their power to help remove the factor that made nuclear power a threat. This factor was war. Oppenheimer thought that it was necessary to strengthen ties among scientists of different nations which would help establish confidence among nations. Without this confidence, an armaments race was sure to develop. People would again reason, "that somehow these separate distrustful atomic arsenals would make for the peace of the world." Oppenheimer continued, "It would seem to me visonary in the extreme, and not practical, to hope that methods which have so sadly failed

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[6] J. Robert Oppenheimer, "Atomic Weapons and the Crisis in Science," The Saturday Review of Literature, vol. 28, Nov. 17, 1945, p. 11.

to avert war in the past will succeed in the face of this far greater peril."[7]

Since the United States was the only nation, at this time, which possessed the atomic bomb, she had the responsibility of formulating a plan for controlling this weapon. The first concern was controlling atomic power on the national level. In some ways, the act that established the Atomic Energy Commission to oversee all developments in the field of atomic energy seemed a realization of the fears of control expressed by scientists after Heroshima. Yet in a statement by Oppenheimer, Enrico Fermi, and Ernest O. Lawrence, these scientists agreed that, "With wisdom operations can be carried on within the framework of the proposed legislation safely, effectively, and in the best interests of this Nation. We believe that the broad powers granted the Commission by the legislature are justified by the importance and perils of the subject."[8]

After the establishing of the Atomic Energy Commission, the United States turned to the problem of how to handle the question of atomic power in international diplomacy. The United States could conceivably have decided that atomic weapons should be declared illegal as gas warfare was after World War I, but this would have been admitting that the United States had committed a crime in using the bomb against Japan. Besides, almost everyone agreed that the United States had plenty of time to exploit its atomic

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[7] Ibid., p. 11.

[8] Hearings, An Act for the Development and Control of Atomic Energy, p. 107.

monopoly. Even Major General Leslie R. Groves, Director of the Manhattan Project, believed that it would take other nations, including Russia, many years to develop an atomic bomb of their own. Then there would be the problem of catching up with the production in the United States.[9]

On June 14, 1946, Bernard Baruch, the United States Representative to the United Nations, presented a plan for controlling the development of atomic energy to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission. This proposal, which came to be known as the Baruch Plan, proposed the following:

> "The United States proposes the creation of an International Development Authority, to which should be entrusted all phases of the development and use of atomic energy, starting with the raw material and including -
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> 1. Managerial control or ownership of all atomic-energy activities potentially dangerous to world security.
> 2. Power to control, inspect, and license all other atomic activities.
> 3. The duty of fostering the beneficial uses of atomic energy.
> 4. Research and development responsibilities of an affirmative character intended to put the Authority in the forefront of atomic knowledge and thus to enable it to comprehend, and thereafter to detect, misuse of atomic energy."[10]

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[9]William B. Bader, The United States and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons, New York, 1968, p. 20

[10]"The Baruch Plan. Statement by the United States Representative (Baruch) to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, June 14, 1946," Documents on Disarmament, 1945-59, vol. I, pp. 10-11.

Also under this plan, as soon as a system of adequate control was established, the bomb would be renounced as a weapon for war. The United States would destroy all her atomic weapons, and no more atomic bombs would be manufactured.[11]

The Baruch Plan died almost as soon as Baruch finished his speech. The Soviet Union refused to even consider the plan. No doubt the United States believed that she was being generous in giving up control of the study of atomic energy to an international committee, but the Soviet Union did not see this as a generous move. The Russians saw in this plan a continuation of American domination in the area of atomic energy. Since the United States would not stop testing bombs until an adequate system of control was established, she could conceivably continue testing for several years. Also, when the commission was established, it would in all probability be dominated by the United States; because she would be the most advanced nation in the field of atomic power, if not still the only nation to have developed the atomic bomb.

Following the United States presentation of the Baruch Plan was the Soviet Union's own plan on controlling atomic power. This was given by the Soviet Representative to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, Andrei Gromyko. Included in this proposal was a plan to "prohibit the production and Employment of Weapons Based on the Use of Atomic Energy

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[11] Ibid., p. 11.

for the purposes of mass destruction."[12] Also, a committee would be formed for the purpose of exchanging new knowledge concerning atomic energy. Unfortunately, there was no provision for any type of inspection. The Russian proposal was basically prohibition without enforcement. Here in the first plans of the Soviet Union and the United States the problem of inspection arose. This problem plagued all future negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The soviets continually insisted that a disarmament program be based on trust, not inspection; and the United States believed she had no reason to trust the Soviet Union, considering her past record of broken treaties.

In 1949, when the Soviet Union exploded her first atomic bomb, the United States lost her monopoly over atomic weapons. Now the problem was one of mutual disarmament. Also, the United States realized that progressively more nations would develop the atomic bomb.

Soon after the Soviet Union developed her atomic bomb, an event occurred which slowed down disarmament negotiations. On June 25, 1950, North Korean forces marched into South Korea, and the United States became involved in the conflict immediately. During the Korean War, which lasted from June of 1950 to July of 1953, the problem of settling this conflict gained priority over any other considerations. The concern of the United States was again that of increasing armaments, rather than disarmament. As

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[12]"Address by the Soviet Representative (Gromyko) to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, June 19, 1946," Documents on Disarmament, 1945-59, vol. I, p. 11.

President Harry Truman stated in a radio address on November 7, 1951, "The aggression in Korea has shown that Communist imperialism will resort to open warfare to gain its ends. In these circumstances we must have strong military defenses, and we are building them."[13]

No doubt the Korean War did make the possibility of a nuclear war seem more real, but it was not realistic to believe that the United States would be talking disarmament in the middle of a war. Disarmament was thought of as a goal for the future, and not something that could be dealt with at that time.

During the Korean War, more powerful weapons were developed such as the hydrogen bomb; but little was achieved in the area of disarmament. At the close of the Truman administration, no real gains had been made towards controlling the development of atomic weapons.

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[13]"Radio Address by President Truman, November 7, 1951," Documents on Disarmament, 1945-59, vol. I, p. 276.

CHAPTER II

EISENHOWER'S SEARCH FOR A DISARMAMENT PROGRAM

When Dwight D. Eisenhower was inaugurated president in January of 1953, the Korean Conflict had not been settled. The armed truce which ended the fighting did not come until July 27, 1953. Up to this time, the arms race had continued. Because of this, President Eisenhower did not forget the problem of disarmament. At the beginning of his administration, he stated his goals on disarmament. They were:

"1. The limitation, by absolute numbers or by an agreed international ratio, or the size of the military and security forces of all nations.

2. A commitment by all nations to set an agreed limit upon that proportion of total production of certain strategic materials to be devoted to military purposes.

3. International control of atomic energy to promote its use for peaceful purposes only and to insure the prohibition of atomic weapons.

4. A limitation or prohibition of other categories of weapons of great destructiveness.

5. The enforcement of all these agreed limitations and prohibitions by adequate safeguards, including a practical system of inspection under the U.N."[1]

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[1]Dwight D. Eisenhower, "The Chance for Peace," Public Papers of the Presidents, vol. I, 1952 (Washington, 1960), pp. 185-86.

One of President Eisenhower's public proposals dealing with disarmament was his "Atoms for Peace" address to the United Nations on December 8, 1953. In this speech, he proposed the investigation of the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the gradual dismantling of atomic weapons. Unfortunately, the prospects were still quite dim for any type of disarmament proposal being accepted by both the United States and the Soviet Union. As Secretary of State John Foster Dulles said in January of 1954, there was little prospect that the Soviet Union would make a proposal for the abolition of atomic weapons that would be acceptable to the United States.[2] Even though the United States was for a disarmament program, the emphasis was usually on a program for arms control and reduction rather than total abolition of nuclear weapons. This was the period of John Foster Dulles and the hard line approach to Communism -- the belief that the United States could not let down its guard against the enemy for one moment. As was stated in the New York Times, "The idea behind U.S. policy is that if atomic weapons were eliminated the advantages would shift to the Soviet Union's manpower."[3]

Yet, later in 1954, two incidents occurred that caused a renewal of interest in formulating some type of disarmament proposal. The emphasis this time was on developing a program which would ban the testing of atomic weapons, even if actual disarmament did not take place. In 1954, the Soviet

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[2]Dana Adams Schmidt, "Molotov's Pleased by Atom Talk Bid," New York Times, Jan. 2, 1954, p. 4.

[3]New York Times, Jan. 24, p. 26.

Union was carrying on a series of atmospheric tests of atomic weapons; and at the same time, the United States began a series of tests of the Hydrogen bomb at Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific. Nuclear fallout from two of these explosions reminded the world of the destructiveness of radioactive fallout miles away from where an atomic bomb was dropped. The first incidence of fallout in Japan in 1945 occurred during the time of war so destruction was expected, but the happenings of 1954 showed the world that people could be injured by weapons tests where all possible precautions had been taken to protect them from the effects of fallout. A Japanese fishing vessel, the Fukuryu Maru (Lucky Dragon), ventured too near the testing area, in spite of the fact that the United States had warned people to stay away from this area.[4] As the result of this, twenty-three fishermen were injured, one fatally, by the fallout.[5] Not long after this, a test by the Soviet Union resulted in a rain of radioactive fallout upon Japan.[6] After these two incidents, there was a renewal of interest in controlling nuclear testing. The next few years were filled with proposals from several countries on banning nuclear tests.

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[4]United States Disarmament Administration, Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapon Tests, History and Analysis of Negotiations, Dept. of State Publication 7258, Disarmament Series 4, Released Oct. 1961, p. 3.

[5]Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Joint Statement Following Discussions with Prime Minister Yoshida of Japan." Public Papers of the Presidents, vol. II, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1960, p. 1043.

[6]Dept. of State Publication 7258, p. 3.

The first country that responded with a request for a test ban, as the result of the above incidents, was India.

Addressing the Indian Parliament, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru expressed hopes that, "some sort of what may be called 'standstill agreement' in respect, at least of these actual explosions, even if arrangements about the discontinuance of production and stockpiling must await more substantial agreements among those principally concerned."[7]

Other statements were also made by Professor Albert Einstein, Professor Dwight Martin, Defense and Scientific Adviser to the Government of Australia, Lester Pearson, Canadian Minister for External Affairs, and Georgi M. Malenkov, Soviet Prime Minister.[8]

As Prime Minister Nehru said, "There can be little doubt about the deep and widespread concern in the world particularly among peoples, of other nations, about these weapons and their dreadful consequences."[9]

At this time, the principle disarmament forum was the Disarmament Subcommittee of the United Nations. The members of this group were the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France, and Canada. Of these, only the first three actually had nuclear weapons and were testing them. At this time, none of the countries were willing to suspend tests

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[7]"Statement by the Indian Prime Minister (Nehru) to Parliament Regarding Nuclear Tests [Extracts], April 2, 1954," Documents on Disarmament, p. 410.

[8]Ibid., p. 409.

[9]Ibid., p. 409.

unless a way could be found to control or limit the production of nuclear weapons. This continued to be the position of President Eisenhower into 1955. As he stated in a press conference of February 1955, in response to a question on the desirability of a test ban, such a ban would have to come in the context of a "decent and proper disarmament proposal."[10] By this statement, Eisenhower meant that a proposal must include more than a test ban.

The next major proposal by the United States was presented at the summit conference in Geneva during July of 1955 by President Eisenhower. The leaders of the other delegations attending were the following: Prime Minister Anthony Eden of the United Kingdom; Premier Edgar Faure of France; and the Soviet Union's chairman of the Council of Ministers, N. A. Bulganin.[11] This Eisenhower proposal dealt with methods of inspecting other nations for possible violations of a treaty. According to this plan, airplanes would be flown over the participating countries and would be authorized to stop and investigate various areas, which had been decided upon previously by the staff administering the program. This came to be known as the "Open Skies" plan.[12] Such close inspection of her territory was rejected by the Soviet Union.

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[10]Eisenhower, Public Papers of the Presidents, vol. III, 1955 (Washington, 1959), p. 287.

[11]Dwight D. Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 1953-1956, (Doubleday and Company, New York, 1963), p. 511.

[12]Ibid., pp. 520-21.

During 1955, the first Soviet proposal was made concerning the banning of nuclear weapons, which did not advocate comprehensive nuclear disarmament. This proposal encouraged countries possessing nuclear weapons to continue trying to reach an agreement that would bring complete disarmament; in the meantime, the testing could be stopped. The programs of the United States still had not separated the problem of a test ban from the program for more comprehensive disarmament. As Secretary of State Dulles stated at the Geneva Meeting of Foreign Ministers on November 11, 1955, "if agreement can be reached to eliminate or limit nuclear weapons under proper safeguards, the United States would be prepared to agree to corresponding restrictions on the testing of such weapons."[13] All of the proposals made were rejected. The Soviet Union would not accept a treaty with inspections, and the United States would not accept one without. Here again, the fundamental difference between the disarmament proposals of the Soviet Union and those of the United States was shown. The Soviet Union insisted that all plans for disarmament be based on simple voluntary agreements. They wanted no safeguards, no control, and no inspections. This had prevented the signing of any agreement. As President Eisenhower said in a speech during October of 1956, "There is only one reason why no safe agreement has been effected to date: the refusal of the Soviet Union to accept any dependable system of mutual safeguards."[14] A test ban as such

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[13]Dept. of State Publication 7258, p. 5.

[14]Eisenhower, Papers of the Presidents, vol. IV, 1956 (Washington, 1958) p. 999.

was still being shied away from, because the United States was, even at this late date, not sure of the ability to detect all tests; and the position of the State Department was that a test ban was meaningless unless accompanied by disarmament plans.

As the result of concern over this problem of atomic weapons tests, on November 1, 1955, the United States and the United Kingdom introduced a resolution to the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations, which called for a scientific committee to study the effects of atomic radiations.[15] While scientists studied the long-term effects of radioactive contamination on the bones, the blood, and the genetic structure of man, anxiety over the continuation of nuclear testing grew all over the world.

These studies prompted a proposal by India in 1956 for the prohibition of tests, which stressed the risks to human health that were brought about by the testing of nuclear weapons. This same year, the Soviet Union renewed her campaign for a cessation of tests, arguing that no supervision would be needed for a banning of tests because technological discoveries had made it possible to detect any explosion of an atomic bomb no matter where it might be set off. What the Soviets wanted to do was to separate the issue of the suspension of tests from other issues of disarmament and work for this as a first step towards the prohibition of nuclear weapons.[16]

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[15]Dept. of State Publication 7258, p. 4.

[16]Ibid., pp. 5-6.

President Eisenhower gave his answer to both of these proposals on October 23, 1956. At this time, he reinforced the position that the United States would not enter into any treaty banning nuclear tests unless the Soviet Union would agree to include other measures of disarmament as well as safeguards such as inspection, which could assure the United States and other parties to the treaty that all signers were carrying out the agreement. President Eisenhower did not believe that an agreement to stop tests, even those of hydrogen bombs only, could be self-inforcing; and he denied that testing imperiled the health of humanity. On the other hand, he thought that continued testing would help the United States to develop better defensive weapons and weapons with less fallout.[17]

In 1957, more proposals were made by the United States and the Soviet Union. Again the proposals failed to result in an agreement. The Soviets continued to refuse to accept a program with inspection; and the United States still insisted on it, before she would agree to any form of a test ban. However, since the Soviets continued to be so firm on their stand that inspection was not needed because tests could be detected without any inspection, in 1958 President Eisenhower decided that technical studies of the problem would help to bring political agreement. Though Premier Khrushchev felt such a study would merely delay negotiations on a treaty, he agreed on May 30, 1958 to a meeting at Geneva.

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[17] Ibid., p. 7.

This meeting at Geneva was composed of a Conference of Experts from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania. The Committee studied the "methods for detecting possible violations of an agreement on the cessation of nuclear tests."[18]

The Geneva Conference of Experts held 30 formal and several informal sessions from July 1 to August 21, 1958. From their study, they reached the conclusion that it would be possible to detect and identify most nuclear explosions. All of the methods of detecting nuclear explosions were discussed. These methods were "the collection of samples of radioactive debris, the recording of seismic, acoustic and hydro-acoustic waves, and the radio signal method, together with the use of on-site inspection of unidentified events which might be suspected of being nuclear explosions."[19] Large explosions were, of course, more easily identified than small explosions, because of the latter's similarity to signals produced by such natural phenomena as earthquakes and thunder storms. The Conference recommended that any countries agreeing on a test ban should establish a network of control posts which would be equiped with all of the apparatus necessary for the various methods of detecting nuclear explosions. These posts would be on islands, continents, and a few ships in the oceans. Also, the control

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[18] Ibid., pp. 14-15. (The list of the men attending these meetings is found in Appendix A).

[19] "Communique and Report of the Conference of Experts to Study the Possibility of Detecting Violations of Possible Agreement on the Suspension of Nuclear Tests, August 21, 1958," Documents on Disarmament, 1945-59, vol. II, p. 1090.

system for these posts would be under the direction of an international control organ.[20]

Immediately after the release of the conclusions of the Conference of Experts, President Eisenhower made a statement in which he said the United States was now willing to negotiate on a treaty for banning nuclear tests. This was the first time that the United States had been willing to separate the problem of a test ban from a program for more inclusive disarmament. The plan for suspending testing was expected to include an international control system as was suggested by the Geneva Conference of Experts. According to the President, the United States would be ready to begin these negotiations on October 31, 1958. Also, in order to create a better atmosphere for the negotiations, President Eisenhower stated that the United States would be willing to suspend the testing of nuclear weapons for a period of one year from the beginning of the negotiations. This was not considered to be a substitution for further work on disarmament. As President Eisenhower stated: "An agreement in this respect is significant if it leads to other and more substantial agreements relating to limitation and reduction of fissionable material for weapons and to other essential phases of disarmament. It is in this hope that the United States makes this proposal."[21]

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[20] Ibid., p. 1091.

[21] "Statement by President Eisenhower: Experts' Report on Detection of Nuclear Tests, August 22, 1958," Department of State Bulletin, Sept. 8, 1958, pp. 378-379.

Other nations that agreed to begin negotiations on October 31, 1958 were the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had been pressing for an end to all testing since April of 1958. Yet at the beginning of November, after negotiations had begun in Geneva, the Soviet Union exploded nuclear devices. President Eisenhower commented on this by saying that this obviously released the United States from any obligations to refrain from testing. However, neither the United States nor the United Kingdom would resume testing, and both hoped that the Soviet Union would stop testing.[22] After these tests, no more atmospheric tests by the Soviet Union were discovered until after August 30, 1961, when she announced a resumption of testing. It was possible, though, that secret underground tests were carried on by the Soviet Union during this time, since this type was much more difficult to detect.[23]

When the negotiations began in Geneva, the United States delegation was led by James J. Wadsworth, who was the United States Representative on Disarmament and Deputy Representative to the United Nations. His deputies were Charles C. Stelle and David H. Popper, and they spoke for the United States in his absence. The British delegation was headed by David Ormsby-Gore, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, with Sir Michael Wright as Deputy British Representative. Semyon K. Tsarapkin represented the Soviet Union. All of the heads of the delegations had held the personal rank

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[22]"Statement by President Eisenhower Regarding Recent Soviet Nuclear Tests, November 7, 1958," Documents on Disarmament, 1945-59, vol. II, p. 1221.

[23]Dept. of State Publication 7258, p. 21.

of Ambassador.[24]

In January of 1959 with the Geneva Conference in session new information was discovered which forced the United States to re-evaluate the data produced by the Geneva Conference of Experts. The Geneva Conference of Experts had stated that even though they might not be able to identify whether an underground explosion was caused by a nuclear device of natural phenomena by seismic means alone, "It would be possible to identify a large fraction of seismic events as natural earthquakes when the direction of first motion of the seismic signal was observed at several appropriately located stations."[25] However, the President's Science Advisory Committee had studied this method further during the Hardtack tests in the fall of 1958. From this study, they reached the conclusion that this method of distinguishing earthquakes from explosions was not nearly as effective as it had been estimated to be by the Geneva Conference of Experts. Also, it was discovered that there were about twice as many earthquakes which were equal to an underground explosion of a given yield as had been estimated. This, of course, greatly reduced the number of earthquakes that could not be distinguished from underground nuclear explosions. The methods of detection the United States had at that time were not as accurate as the Conference of Experts had believed they were. More research was necessary to reduce

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[24] Ibid., p. 22.

[25] "Panel on Seismic Improvement Reports Findings on Underground Explosions," U.S. Dept. of State Bulletin, vol. 41, July 1959, p. 17.