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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

15-1 51261-4
28 MAY 1964

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg
Chairman
Atomic Energy Commission
1717 H Street, N. W.
Washington 25, D. C.

OFFICE DIARY
GLENN T. SEABORG
Chr USAEC, 1961-72
FOLDER-PAGE 41274

Dear Glenn:

This is a follow-up on my interim reply of 4 May on the gas centrifuge - Nth country problem. I am asking John McNaughton to represent me on this subject, with Art Barber as his alternate.

I agree that the acquisition of fissionable material for even one or two weapons by a non-nuclear country could have a destabilizing impact on international relations which would be harmful to US security. The US currently supports a number of non-proliferation measures at Geneva, at the IAEA in Vienna, and in bilateral discussions with the USSR and other involved countries. In addition to these measures, the US should make every effort to delay diffusion of the means of producing nuclear weapons.

I recognize that the controls which can be placed on technology can only retard, not prevent, its growth and diffusion. Even so the goal of retardation is a worthwhile one. The DOD would support practical measures such as the following to retard the spread of gas centrifuge technology:

1. Measures which would dampen the incentive of countries capable of developing their own gas centrifuge technology. For example, the US should leave no doubt that U-235 for peaceful purposes will be available from this country on attractive terms but under tight controls. The US has supported and should continue to support international safeguards on sales of natural uranium to the end of preventing its use in production of U-235 for weapons.

2. Measures which would inhibit assistance to less developed countries. I would favor continuation of existing restrictive US classification policies on the gas centrifuge process and endeavor to see that all countries with significant centrifuge programs follow similar policies. Likewise, I would favor continued export controls on gas centrifuge equipment.

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED *
BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/OC

REVIEWED BY

DATE

Carl W. [Signature] 11/30/87
* Lt. OASD Bodling TO DOE, OC
Gilbert dated 9/1/87
J. Diaz 11/30/87

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3. Measures which would support US gas centrifuge technology at a high level so that the US can stay abreast, or ahead, of developments in other countries. (Stringent security controls would be essential to prevent dissemination of this technology.)

In your letter of April 17 you ask: "Are there other national security objectives which would limit the implementation of a prevention or maximum delay policy as it may relate to any particular Nth Power?" I would say that there are no military objectives which directly conflict with the delay policy. While the DOD supports increasing cooperation with our allies in the control of the Western nuclear deterrent, we are firmly opposed to the creation of independent Nth country nuclear capabilities. At the same time, concrete actions to implement the delay policy must be viewed in the context of the totality of US relations with each individual country, in the appropriate time frame and circumstances. We should want to be apprised of specific proposed actions or contemplated problems in this field, particularly if they involve relations with our major allies.

Sincerely,

Bob

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