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July 20, 1961

AEC 862/50

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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

ENRICHED URANIUM FOR U.K. CIVIL REACTOR PROGRAM

Note by the Secretary

The Assistant General Manager for International Activities has requested that the attached memorandum from the Director of International Affairs be circulated for the information of the Commission.

W. B. McCool

Secretary

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UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

MEMORANDUM

July 11, 1961

TO A. R. Luedecke, General Manager
THRU: John A. Hall, AGMIA

FROM A. A. Wells, Director
Division of International Affairs

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE SUPPLY BY U.S. OF ENRICHED URANIUM FOR UNITED
KINGDOM CIVIL REACTOR PROGRAM

It will be recalled that during the period January 9-13 of this year, staff members of the Commission met with representatives of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority for exploratory discussions concerning the possible interest of the British in obtaining enriched uranium from the U.S. for use in a civil reactor program, primarily involving the advanced gas-cooled reactor (AEC 862/49). At the conclusion of the discussions, the UKAEA representatives indicated that they planned to give further consideration to their proposed program prior to reaching a decision as to whether they may wish to obtain the fuel from the United States. Subsequent to the discussions, Chairman Seaborg received a letter dated January 27, 1961, from Sir Roger Makins (AEC 782/44) stating that any agreement which might be considered would not be needed until 1962.

In early June, the AEC Scientific Representative in London was told informally by Sir William Cook, UKAEA Member for Reactors, that it would be about two years before the Authority would be in a position to decide on further construction of AGR or Dragon-type reactors. Sir William added that for this reason it would be about that long before the United Kingdom would be in a position to make a definite arrangement regarding enriched uranium from the United States for these reactor types.

However, during the visit of Messrs. Kratzer, Staebler and Labowitz to London the week of June 19, they were told by Mr. D.E.H. Peirson, Secretary of the UKAEA, that Sir Roger Makins "will be able to say something definite" regarding the proposed United Kingdom purchase of United States U-235 "when he sees Dr. Seaborg this September." It was indicated that the United Kingdom position is currently being re-examined in light of the new United States prices recently announced.

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