

(2) Project VELA

During the hearings on the "Technical Aspects of Detection and Inspection of a Nuclear Weapons Test Ban," April 19-22, 1960, testimony was received from a representative of ARPA on Project VELA, a program for increasing basic research in seismology, along the recommendations of the Berkner Panel. At the time of the hearings, the Defense Department had not determined the level of support for this project for fiscal year 1961. The committee prepared its summary-analysis of the hearings and during the week of May 1 met with representatives of the State Department, DOD, and AEC in order that they might have a copy of the draft summary-analysis prior to its public release. On May 4 and 5, copies of the final draft were made available to the Defense Department representatives, as well as representatives from AEC and State Department, at which time they were informed of the committee's intention to release to the press, copies for Monday, May 9, release. On Saturday, May 7, the Joint Committee staff began to receive inquiries from newspaper reporters concerning a release made that day as to Project VELA and the level of support it would receive in fiscal year 1961. Subsequently, the staff by request received a copy of a prepared press statement of that date, issued by James C. Hagerty, press secretary to the President, which discussed the program and the intention to detonate nuclear explosions in furtherance of the program.

The release the JCAE staff subsequently determined originated with the Defense Department and was coordinated with the State Department on a rush basis May 6. The Defense Department at no time alerted the Joint Committee as to its intentions of issuing a release notwithstanding they had been informed of the committee's planned Monday, May 9, release.

(3) Project Orion

This is a project involving the use of nuclear explosive devices for rocket propulsion and theoretically would be used for space propulsion. On the basis of limited information we presently have, this project was originated in the summer of 1958 by ARPA in response to a proposal by General Dynamics. The initial funding amounted to \$1 million and an additional extension of \$400,000 also was provided through the Air Force. While we do not know the full funding to date, \$1 million apparently was available in 1960 for this project.

The first information received from the Defense Department concerning this project was a letter dated February 17, 1960, from General Loper. This was in response to a written staff inquiry to him dated January 8, 1960, making reference to news articles of this project.

(4) SNAP projects

Although we have been kept informed by the AEC of some of the Commission's work in this field (satellite nuclear auxiliary power), the Defense Department, through the Air Force, reportedly has within this past year solicited studies for SNAP reactors. We understand, for example, that the Air Force has solicited bids for a study of a 300-kilowatt SNAP reactor power supply of which we have not been