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AEC 597/17

June 18, 1953

COPY NO. 13

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

PLANNING FOR OPERATION CASTLE (u)

Note by the Secretary

The attached letter to the Chairman, MLC is circulated for the information of the Commission.

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ROY B. SNAPP
Secretary

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AUTHORITY: <u>ADG</u>			
NAME: <u>DM LJC</u>			

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UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 12, 1953

Honorable Robert LeBaron
Chairman, Military Liaison Committee
to the Atomic Energy Commission

Dear Mr. LeBaron:

Reference is made to our letter of January 2, 1953* which outlined the CASTLE Operation as we contemplated it at that preliminary stage. Since that time in the process of further development and test, it has become apparent that, if feasible, the scope of CASTLE should be increased in the interest of assuring the resolution of factors bearing on emergency capability weapons and special material requirements. At this stage, we believe a program of six shots would assist materially in the above, and, accordingly, we have been working with Joint Task Force Seven on questions of the feasibility of such a program. From their standpoint and ours, it appears practicable to execute a six shot program and to maintain the proposed timing of CASTLE, provided the Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Defense accept such a program and provided the various contributing phases such as special materials production at Oak Ridge remain on schedule.

 It is presently planned to detonate two shots at Eniwetok and four at Bikini. The first detonation is scheduled for February 15, 1954, with seven to ten days intervals between shots.

It should be emphasized, however, that the actual scope and plan for execution of CASTLE cannot be fixed until about September. At that time the relevant factors bearing on the merits of the various proposals and on the operational capabilities and limitations both of material production and of a Task Force nature

*Secretariat Note: Circulated as AEC 597/7.

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will be more complete. We hope crystallization of these factors will be sufficient at that time to enable us to reach agreement on the specific scope for CASTLE.

In the meantime, we would appreciate assurance that the Department of Defense concurs that planning should proceed on the basis of an augmented CASTLE as described above, subject to final resolution of specific plans this Fall, and that all concerned can proceed into the operational phase of CASTLE on the same basis as we did in the IVY Operation, which proved so successful.

Sincerely yours,

Gordon Dean
Chairman

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