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SECURITY INFORMATION

AEC 597/7

January 7, 1953

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FOLDER # 3 MRA-7 CASTLE

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

OPERATION CASTLE - LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN, MLC

(14)

Note by the Secretary

1. At Meeting 793, on December 22, 1952 after discussion of AEC 597/4 the Commission noted that the proposal to defer CASTLE would be discussed with the MLC. At the 76th AEC-MLC Conference on December 23, 1952 the proposal was discussed and concurred in by the MLC and Mr. Dean stated that a letter to the DOD making a formal recommendation for the postponement of CASTLE would be forthcoming.

2. The attached letter to the Chairman, MLC, referred to by Mr. Dean, is circulated for the information of the Commission.

AEC
597
7

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW
Determination (circle number(s))
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2. CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO
3. CONTAINS NO DOE CLASSIFIED INFO
4. COORDINATE WITH:
5. CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
6. CLASSIFIED INFO BRACKETED
7. OTHER(SPECIFY):
REVIEW DATE: 08/22/04
AUTHORITY: DDO
NAME: Greg Cook

DOE Order 5650-ZB
REVIEWER (NAME): H.W. Kee
DATE: 5/23/95

ROY B. SNAPP
Secretary

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By authority of U. S. Atomic Energy Commission

Per Gen. Sec. K. E. Fielder, P. 23 Date 1-8-53

Document No. LXI-2124-148

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SECURITY INFORMATION

UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 2, 1953

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

Dear Mr. LeBaron:

Reference is made to your letter of November 3, 1952* and my answer of December 15, 1952,** concerning plans for CASTLE.

The results of the IVY thermonuclear experiment indicate certain reorientation of the thermonuclear weapons program in order to insure broad and rapid progress in this activity. The revised program and its bearing on the timing of the CASTLE Operation are discussed below.

[REDACTED] It is now apparent that material availability for this weapon indicates November as the earliest possible date for its full-scale test.

DOE
6.1(a)

[REDACTED]

DOE
6.1(a)

The Mike device behaviour leads us to believe that adaptation of its design to a weapon or weapons offers real promise.

DOE
6.1(a)

To convert the Mike type design to a weapon configuration, however, involves a great amount of engineering and process

* Secretariat note - Circulated in AEC 597
** Secretariat note - Circulated in AEC 597/3

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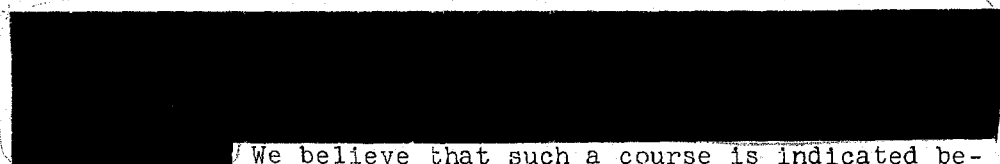
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development and test, including a number of important tests now scheduled for the UPSHOT series in the Spring of 1953.


We believe, however, that at least one and probably both of them will emerge as possible for test and emergency capability early in 1954.

DOE
6.1 (b)


We believe that such a course is indicated because it offers increased promise for obtaining a capability in thermonuclear weapons in early 1954.

DOE
6.1 (b)

We realize that the above suggested plan has a major impact on military planning as well as on the supporting Task Force. With the opening of these several avenues for advance in thermonuclear weapon development, and with the emphasis that is being placed on the program, a possibility still exists that one weapon model may unexpectedly develop ahead of the others to the point where it becomes feasible and advantageous to proof-test this model in the fall of 1953. To be able to take advantage of this possibility should it arise, it would be desirable for the JTF to retain the capability of mounting a much simpler operation on an emergency basis in the fall of 1953.

In view of the importance of this program, your early comments are requested.

Sincerely yours,

H. D. Smyth
Acting Chairman

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